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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

HEDLEY BULL AND JUSTICE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

BY

SHAUN NARINE

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL 1990

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ABSTRACT

The question of "what is justice in the international system?" is of increasing importance in a changing political world. Hedley Bull believes that the poor, weak nations of the developing world will lead a revolt against the existing international system if their needs are not accommodated within that system. Thus, he argues that an effective "international justice" must be the product of a moral consensus between the many competing ideologies and moralities of the modern world. Just change, he asserts, is not only possible but is essential to the continued survival of international order.

However, Bull is unable to convincingly support his arguments. He does not prove that the developing world is truly capable of disrupting the international system in the way that he predicts. More important, he is unable to reconcile the reality of cultural and political diversity, which he considers to be both inevitable and desirable, with the kind of international commonality that his vision of international justice requires. The very diversity which Bull recognizes and respects acts to prevent his version of international justice from becoming a reality. Using Bull's own analysis of international society as a starting point, it becomes clear that the range and variety of international thought is too great to allow the development of the moral consensus on which Bull's international justice is built.

Ultimately, Bull asks highly pertinent questions about the nature of justice in the international system, and he offers invaluable insights into the workings of that system. He lays out the conditions that are necessary for international justice to be achieved, but he cannot show how those conditions can be met.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE VALUE OF VALUES IN INTERNATIONAL THEORY

Attempting to address the question of justice in the international system is a daunting task. Precisely what "justice" is, how morality operates in the international system, and the nature and limitations of the state system are all concerns that defy any easy answers. This project will not attempt to offer any easy answers, but I will also not attempt to explore all the tendencies and arguments surrounding the question of international justice. Instead, I will focus on Hedley Bull and his discussion of justice in the international system. I have chosen to examine Bull for the reason that I believe his approach to the question of international justice encompasses the many complex forces that must be considered in order to give the concept of "justice" a practical significance. In this respect, he differs greatly from many other theorists who consider "justice" from an ideal perspective, showing little appreciation for either international political realities.

In examining Bull's exploration of international justice, it is necessary to accept Bull on his own terms. It would be an endless exercise to criticize and compare all of his arguments to contrary views. Many questions can be asked of the position that Bull takes; many different assertions can be made. I will only attempt to deal with the most important and obvious concerns that Bull's discussion requires be addressed.

Hedley Bull wrote:

> The Western tradition of theory of international relations, it appears to me, is parochial and in-grown. It needs to be liberated on the one hand from its preoccupation with the relations of states, and on the other hand from its neglect of the moral or normative dimension.[1]

Liberating the Western international relations tradition from these limitations were two of the objectives that Hedley Bull set out to accomplish - with qualified success - during his academic career. Bull moved beyond the domination of the state in international relations theory by starting his inquiry with international society. He dealt with morality in international relations by recognizing the significant role that it can play in the behavior of states. It is this latter concern that forms the basis of this entire project.

As will be made more explicit in the chapters to follow, Bull conceives of justice as a moral concept. His calls for international justice are calls for an international morality, reached by consensus between states, which will be capable of limiting and shaping state action and, most importantly, will provide the justification for a redistribution of wealth and power within the state system. The central concern of the discussion to follow is to determine if it is plausible to argue that the potential influence of values in the international system is so great as to be able to regulate state behavior through international justice.

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[1] Hedley Bull, "New Directions in the Theory of Interntional Relations", International Studies, v. 14, April-June 1975, p.287.

Before embarking upon this endeavor, however, it is necessary to explain why it is that Bull places upon ethics and morality the value that he does. To do this, I will consider Hedley Bull's worldview and his approach to the study of international relations. As this study progresses, Bull's opinions on such concepts as realism, international society and, of course, justice in the international society will be developed. For now, however, it is necessary to explain some of the basic premises underlying Bull's analysis of the international system. This will provide the reader with a starting point from which to understand Bull's thoughts on justice and morality.

It is most instructive to begin an examination of Bull's thought by first understanding how he defined the study of international relations theory in the Western world.

> By theory of international relations I mean simply the body of general propositions that may be put forward about relations among states, or more generally about world politics. All discussion of world politics-whether of its history, or of its current practice - is at least implicitly theoretical in its assumptions. The task of theoretical inquiry is to identify these assumptions and make them explicit, to investigate them, and, where this is possible, to establish a firm foundation of theoretical knowledge.[2]

Bull's understanding of what is encompassed by international relations theory is very broad, but this is attributable to his recognition that the complexity of international political

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[2] Hedley Bull, "New Directions in the Theory of International Relations", International Studies, v.14, April-June 1975, p. 277.

reality cannot be reduced to simple formulae or blanket assumptions. Attempting to define guiding principles in international relations theory is a necessary undertaking, but it must be recognized that doing so will not always be possible. Indeed, judging from Bull's own work, finding such principles may be more the exception than the rule.

Bull's methodological approach to theory also reflected this belief in international complexity. Bull asked questions about international relations,

> ...questions which were essential to him: ...about society and culture, about the place of war and the conceptions of it, about the relations between the influence of the system and the nature of the state in the determination of events, about the right of states to intervene in each other's affairs - and so on.[3]

Bull answered these questions through a consideration of the influence of forces, other than just power, which shape the conduct of states. He was an advocate of the classical approach to the study of international relations, an approach which subjects the most significant questions of international politics to philosophical and historical scrutiny and

> ...is characterized above all by explicit reliance upon the exercise of judgment and by the assumptions that if we confine ourselves to strict standards of verification and proof there is very little of significance that can be said about international relations, that general propositions about this subject must therefore derive from a scientifically imperfect process of perception or intuition, and that these general propositions cannot be accorded anything more than the tentative and inconclusive status appropriate

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[3] Stanley Hoffman, "Hedley Bull and His Contribution to International Relations", International Affairs, v. 62, #2, Spring 1986, p. 182.

to their doubtful origin.[4]

This philosophy is reiterated in Bull's criticism of the "scientific method" approach to international relations.

> ...(I)n my view no strictly scientific theory can come to grips with the central issues of (international relations). These central issues are in part issues which concern the value premisses of international conduct... But even those issues which do not concern matters of value, but which can be dealt with in purely positive or non-normative terms, require us to rely upon the exercise of judgement of a kind familiar in works of philosophy, history, and law. Such exercises of judgement are not arbitrary or mere appeals to intuition or assumed authority: they are verified or falsified by examination of the world. But they cannot pass the test of logico-mathematical demonstrability or verifiability by strict scientific procedure. A strictly scientific study of the subject...does not supply us with a guide to the workings of the human mind in international politics which is better illuminated by the historical imagination, by the insights of philosophy or introspective psychology, or even by some works of fiction, than by works of this kind.[5]

This approach to international relations may not lead to the construction of a parsimonious international relations theory, but it does lead to a more realistic assessment of the international system.

Part of this more realistic assessment of the international system is the role accorded within it to values and morality. Bull understood human beings as moral creatures whose structures, institutions, and politics necessarily reflect moral qualities.

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[4] Hedley Bull, "International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach", Contending Approaches to International Politics, Klaus Knorr and James N. Rosenau (ed.), Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1969, p.20.

[5] Bull, "New Approaches...", p. 279.

It was Bull's firm belief, based on his observation of political reality, that the states of the world constitute a society. This society possesses many of the basic attributes of all societies, most notably common rules and institutions. It is on the foundation of international society that Bull constructed his analysis of ethics in international relations. Stanley Hoffman identifies "the importance of moral concerns in Bull's works" and explains Bull's position:[6]

> ...(A)s far as the study of international relations is concerned, international society has a moral basis; indeed, Bull's concern for international society and his interest in moral conceptions are inextricably linked. The beliefs of the members of the international society cannot be reduced to their interests and strategies of power...According to Bull, the beliefs of the members of the international society influence the historical evolution of that society. Consequently, the study of international relations must address the question of moral beliefs, in particular in order to establish which beliefs represent a consensus of the members, what the substance of that consensus is, and where its limits and weak points can be found.[7]

The fact that the foundation of Bull's thought and worldview relies on an understanding of the fundamental importance of ethical forces and their effect on political and social development cannot be clearer than in this passage. This point must be emphasized and reiterated: to Bull, moral and ethical forces influence international politics - sometimes profoundly. Working from this starting point, the objects of this thesis

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[6] Stanley Hoffman, "Hedley Bull and His Contribution to International Relations", International Affairs, v. 62, #2, Spring 1986, p. 183.

[7] Ibid.

will be, first, to prove that Bull's understanding of the importance of these forces is correct, and then to demonstrate how far these moral/ethical factors can go toward becoming either the foundation of a common conception of justice in the international community or, conversely, the source of divisions that would undermine this kind of justice.

Bull's concern with values extended beyond the recognition of their efficacy in international politics and into the role that they play in the study of international relations. Not surprisingly, he applauded what he saw as "...the rediscovery of values" in international relations theory, but he was extremely critical of attempts on the part of some political scientists to promote their own value preferences through their writings.[8] Such exercises, he felt, had the potential to threaten the "tradition of (a) detached and disinterested study of politics..." by subordinating the study of values to the promotion of values.[9] In a further recognition of international complexity, Bull distrusted "moral generalizations", believing such generalizations to be "...impossible, because of the complexity of concrete situations and because of the very difficulty of the choices faced by statesmen."[10] He was also very aware of the many different moral perspectives present in international relations and the difficulty involved in choosing

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[8] Bull, "New Approaches...", p. 283.

[9] Bull, "New Approaches...", p. 284.

[10] Ibid.

one over others. Nonetheless, Bull did not believe in "value-free" inquiry; indeed, he believed such inquiry to be both impossible and of very little interest. Rather, he argued that

> (W)hat characterizes a properly academic approach to the study of world politics is not the absence of value premises, but the willingness to state those premises explicitly and to subject them to examination and criticism - to treat one's value premises as part of the subject.[11]

Bull came to this conclusion through his belief in the need for political scientists to grapple with the "moral disagreements" that are so much a part of international affairs. The moral rules governing international conduct, he believed, are subject to rational analysis, even though, except in the cases where the disputing parties share similar or universal moral premises, moral disagreements might not be susceptible to resolution by rational argument. In Bull's view, defining and applying the moral rules of international conduct is a worthwhile and necessary endeavor for the political scientist. In Stanley Hoffman's assessment, it was this possibility of moral argument, combined with the reality of multiple moralities, that led Bull to insist that each political scientist lay out the moral foundation of his work.

As Hoffman points out, however, "Bull himself never did lay out fully the foundations of his own moral position..."[12] Towards the end of his career, Bull did begin to make his own value

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[11] Bull, "New Approaches...", p.284.

[12] Hoffman, "Hedley Bull...", p.184.

preferences more explicit, but he never attempted to present them as part of his theory. Bull's prescriptions for a more just world order are very general and try to avoid, as far as possible, laying out specific moral guidelines to be followed. Whether this constitutes a strength or a weakness in Bull's approach is unclear. As Hoffman points out, "Hedley Bull's writings on ethics and international relations are more suggestive than systematic."[13] There are important elements in Bull's discussion of international morality and justice which must be inferred from his earlier work and are not categorically stated. Hoffman also notes the tension between Bull's realism and his concentration on international institutions, and notes other "oscillations" and ambiguities in Bull's work that sometimes make interpretation and understanding of Bull's thought rather difficult.

In fact, Bull's thought changed and evolved throughout his career. Bull changed his mind or refined his thought in a number of areas, including international justice. This is not to say that there is no continuity between Bull's earlier opinions and his later positions. Determining precisely where Bull ends up on a particular issue, however, is sometimes difficult.

Bull is characterized by R.J. Vincent as

> (standing) four-square in the Grotian or rationalist tradition, toward the pluralist end of its spectrum in the early writing on Hobbes and on Grotius; more toward the solidarist end in his later writing on the

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[13] Hoffman, "Hedley Bull...", p.183.

expansion of international society.[14]

Whether or not Bull can be considered a Grotian is a question with which I have greater difficulty than Vincent. Certainly, Bull believed in the existence of an international society, but his view on international law is more complex than simply accepting that it should have efficacy. More problematic for the discussion to follow is that it is never clear where Bull stands within the natural law tradition or what his understanding of natural law actually is.

Bull's later work is a significant departure from most of what he did throughout his career. Bull's strength is as an observer of international relations. His talent lies in apprehending, with extraordinary clarity, the actual operations of the international system, and the forces that shape that system. When he attempts to offer prescriptions for the international system, he is on much shakier theoretical ground. This is hardly to say that his prescriptions are without value, but the positions that he takes in his earlier work frequently come back to haunt him. Indeed, Bull is often his own worst critic. Nonetheless, his status as a respected observer of international affairs adds an extra element of legitimacy to the warnings that he sounds regarding the state of the international system. What remains to be seen is if these warnings can lead to the attainment of international justice.

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[14] R.J. Vincent, "Hedley Bull and Order in International Politics", Millenium, v.17, #2, 1988, p.197.

The need to and analyze emphasize the importance that Bull places upon the role of values in the international system arises from the fact that most international relations theories attempt to downplay or exclude the moral factor in their depiction of the international system. Morality does play a significant role in the conduct of international relations; justice is directly related to morality. Bull recognizes this reality and builds upon it. Whether or not what he attempts to build is truly in accordance with the realities of modern international politics remains to be seen.

This work is divided into four subsequent chapters. Chapter Two examines the nature of the state system, as defined by the realists. Its purpose is to determine whether or not the possibility of moral behaviour on the part of states is really plausible. It assesses Hedley Bull's approach to the study of international relations, contrasting Bull's approach with that of realism, the dominant theory of international relations. Its basic conclusion is that realism systemically avoids the issues of morality and ideology that Bull attempts to incorporate into his own analysis of the international system. This deliberate omission on the part of the realists, I argue, constitutes a fundamental flaw in their theory, and lays the groundwork for Bull's less systematic but more accurate interpretation of international politics.

Chapter Three is an exposition and critique of Bull's discussion of justice. I contend that there are serious flaws in

Bull's argument for justice. Most of these flaws are found in his assessment of the existing international system and the role of the developing world within that system. I do not attempt to criticize Bull's concept of justice itself. Instead, I accept it on its own terms and attempt to explain its complexities.

Chapter Four is a discussion of international society. Bull places his analysis of international justice within the context of international society. In this chapter, I am primarily concerned with evaluating whether or not the conditions set by Bull for the attainment of international justice can be met by international society. I use Bull's own discussion of the international system as the baseline against which his prescription for international justice is measured. My conclusion is that the existing international society is too divided to develop the kind of moral consensus that Bull deems to be necessary for international justice.

This project is primarily designed to examine what, if anything, Bull had to contribute to the overall discussion of international justice. Bull's understanding of the nature of international order and the problems associated with it is undeniable. But justice is the flip side of order, as Bull was fully aware. One is not complete without the other. Bull did not complete his study of international justice. Indeed, in most respects, he barely skimmed the surface. Nonetheless, his work does have the potential to offer valuable insights into the nature of international justice. My greatest concern is to

determine if it lives up to the promise of that potential.

CHAPTER TWO: THE NATURE OF THE STATE SYSTEM

Introduction

Determining the nature of the modern state system is necessary in order to decide what can be accomplished within the limits set by that system. Analyzing Hedley Bull's discussion of international justice is a pointless exercise if there are fairly obvious or widely-accepted reasons as to why just behavior in international politics is not possible. Just behavior is moral behavior. Thus, this chapter will be concerned with discussing the place of morality in the international system. I believe that there are strong reasons to accept that moral behaviour between states is not only possible but is, in fact, commonplace and indispensable to the functioning of the international system. There is a strong moral base on which Bull can build his concept of international justice. I believe that the proof of this assertion can be found in an examination of realism, the traditional approach to the study of international relations.

According to K.J. Holsti, the international relations theory of realism remains the dominant school of thought within political science circles.[1] The fact that realism enjoys such popularity in the international political science community is a testament to the perception that realism presents an interpretation of the world which appears to be validated by history as well as current events.

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[1] K.J. Holsti, The Dividing Discipline (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1985), pp.87-89.

Nonetheless, even though Bull frequently found himself in agreement with realist interpretations of the state system, he was not a realist. Bull's Grotian perspective led him to begin his analysis of international relations with the international society; realists, on the other hand, start with the state and its power. For the purposes of this discussion, however, the greatest difference between Hedley Bull and the realists is found in Bull's emphasis on the influence of morality on the conduct of international politics. Realists profess to believe in an amoral international political system; states are seen to operate on the basis of rational self-interest. As has been discussed, however, Bull believes that moral and ideological factors can have a decisive influence in determining the actions of states and statesmen. Hedley Bull's disagreements with what remains the dominant school of thought in international relations need to be justified and explained, especially as realism would not seem to permit the moral concept of international justice advocated by Bull to become a reality.

This chapter examines realism from the perspective of Hans Morgenthau, a political scientist who is often regarded as the most authoritative of modern realists. Using Morgenthau's principles, realism is shown to be extremely flexible and fully capable of accommodating many of the changes occurring in the modern world, which critics of realism believe to be beyond its reach. Realism, it shall be argued, offers invaluable insights into the workings of international relations. Nonetheless, the

continuing inability of realism to deal with moral/ideological factors constitutes a fundamental analytical flaw in the theory. I will show that realism is unable to escape from the need to account for morality and ideology within the body of the theory, despite its claims to the contrary. Ultimately, realism itself inadvertantly offers some of the most compelling arguments for the importance of moral/ideological factors in the international system.

Bull's approach to international relations, on the other hand, does accommodate these moral/ideological forces, as well as the most important elements of realism. Bull's reading of the international system will be shown to be more accurate and complete than that of the realists. Bull deals directly and comprehensively with the forces that the realists attempt to deny. The power of morality and ideology in the system buttresses the idea that an effective moral concept of international justice is possible. What remains to be determined is whether or not such a concept is plausible.

Basic Realism

Precisely how to define "realism" is a somewhat contentious issue. Political scientists of the realist school of thought do share a number of common principles in their understanding of "realism".

Holsti characterizes realists as having reached a consensus on the nature of the three fundamental concerns of international relations. First, it is agreed that the focus of international

relations should be on the causes of war and conditions of peace. Second, the nation-state is the main unit of analysis. Third, the realist worldview is of states operating within a condition of potential war. Beyond this broad consensus, however, there is considerable debate and disagreement about what the possibilities and limitations of the system actually are among realists themselves.

Beyond accepted realism, there are, according to Holsti, many new theories of international relations which claim to be non-realist. The many different variations possible within the classical realist tradition are underlined by Holsti's contention that the vast majority of "new" international relations theories can be accommodated within the confines of realism. The classical paradigm, in Holsti's estimation, has been expanded through the efforts of modern theorists, but it has not been altered in any fundamental way.

Using Holsti's system, Hedley Bull would seem to fall into the realist camp. Certainly the assumptions that Bull makes about the world are most closely aligned to realism. However, as R.J. Vincent has pointed out, Bull's thought appears to defy classification; Bull adopts many different elements from many different theories into his own understanding of international relations.[2] Another reason for not classifying Bull as a realist is that Holsti's theoretical divisions take no account of the

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[2] R.J. Vincent, "Hedley Bull and Order in International Politics", Millenium,(v.17, #2,1988) 196-197.

common realist rejection of morality, a principle that is the focus of this entire chapter. Thus, while Holsti may have successfully drawn broad parameters within which to divide the study of international relations, he may be missing one of the most important characteristics of realism.

Michael Joseph Smith presents what I consider to be a more typical description of realism, but one which appears to capture the important distinctions between realism and other theories. Smith presents "four key components to the realist approach".[3]

> First are the assumptions about the character of human nature. Realists assume an ineradicable tendency to evil, a universal animus dominandi among all men and women...This treatment of human nature, reaching back to Thucydides, informs every facet of realist analysis.[4]

Smith presents this view of human nature as being fundamental to realist thought, though the origin and degree of this human evil differs from realist to realist. I do not entirely share Smith's assertions about the realist approach to human nature, as least as regards Hans Morgenthau. It is not clear to me that Morgenthau does, in fact, posit such a unidimensional view of human nature. Rather, for theoretical reasons, he reduces humanity to the very basic formula of "political man". For practical purposes, however, Smith's reading of Morgenthau may be correct. Hedley Bull does not discuss his conception of human

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[3] Michael Joseph Smith, Realist Thought From Weber To Kissinger, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press,1986), p.219.

[4] Ibid.

nature, but the stress that he places on moral forces indicates that he does not reduce human behavior to such stark terms.

The second assumption of realism, according to Smith, is that states are the primary actors of the international system. The third assumption is that "power and its pursuit by individuals and states (is) ubiquitous and inescapable."[5] International institutions, laws and structures are evaluated in terms of how they affect the overall distribution and manipulation of power between the states within the system.

"Fourth, realists assume that the real issues of international politics can be understood by the rational analysis of competing interests defined in terms of power."[6] All states pursue their national interest by seeking power and by not considering moral/ideological factors when formulating policy. Following these "universalized policies of national interest"[7] leads to policies of international moderation precisely because the distorting effect of irrational morality/ideology is omitted. Thus, the realist program can be seen to be fulfilling the moral goal of creating international moderation, even as it denies the appropriateness of moral/ideological considerations in international affairs.

Smith's interpretation of realism adds more meat to the concept than Holsti's, though the two interpretations are not

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[5] Ibid., p.220.

[6] Ibid., p.221.

[7] Ibid., p. 221.

necessarily in conflict. Even so, the fact that so many different approaches and ideas can fit under the rubric of realism underlines the difficulty involved in evaluating the theory as a whole. Realist thinkers such as Max Weber, Reinhold Niebuhr and George Kennan have developed their own versions of realism which, while sharing fundamental principles, are nonetheless distinct from each other in important ways. There is no monolithic realism that can be subjected to rigorous inquiry; there are simply many variations on the theme. Thus, attempting to understand realism, and the nature and limitations of the state system that it describes, requires singling out a particular conception of realism to serve as a model and guide. I have decided to use Hans Morgenthau's version of realism as the paradigm example of the theory. His realism, in my view, best illuminates both the strengths and weaknesses of the approach.

Defining the Terms: Hans Morgenthau's "Realism"

Hans Morgenthau's major exposition on the nature of realism, the book Politics Among Nations, is considered by many political scientists to be the definitive work on the subject. Much of the modern understanding of realism has evolved from a reading and interpretation of what Morgenthau wrote. It is my belief that Morgenthau's realism allows for considerable flexibility within the international system while remaining true to fundamental realist principles. It might be argued that this interpretation of realism is too flexible, that it sacrifices some of its ability to offer pertinent insights into the international system

by being too liberal in what it encompasses. In truth, however, the scope of Morgenthau's realism permits the theory to offer compelling and theoretically consistent explanations for modern international phenomena. More significantly, it might be argued that I am misrepresenting Morgenthau's realism by interpreting it in a manner inconsistent with what he intended. I readily admit that I see Morgenthau's basic principles of realism, discussed below, as encompassing a wider range of possibilities than Morgenthau might have seen. I have two responses to this criticism. First, I believe that Morgenthau is rather narrowly understood by many critics, so I am not convinced that Morgenthau would not accommodate the position that I shall take regarding his realism. Second, Morgenthau presents a theory based on a number of principles, which he then interprets in a particular way. Admittedly, the principles are the result of certain assumptions that he makes, but there is no need to deny other interpretations of the same theory, so long as the alternative interpretations do not conflict with the basic principles. This is essentially the approach that I will take when trying to illustrate the flexibility and relevance of realism to the contemporary world.

Morgenthau's objective is to construct a "rational theory of international politics".[8] Thus, realism does not seek to be an exact picture of international politics, but seeks to capture the

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[8] Hans Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations,(New York: Alfred A. Knopf,1985), p. 10.

essence of the international realm. According to Morgenthau,

> (p)olitical realism...knows that political reality is replete with contingencies and systemic irrationalities and points to the typical influences they exert upon foreign policy. Yet it shares with all social theory the need, for the sake of theoretical understanding, to stress the rational elements of political reality; for it is these rational elements that make reality intelligible for theory. Political realism presents the theoretical construct of a rational foreign policy which experience can never completely achieve.[9]

My concern is to determine if reducing international politics to its rational skeleton is a legitimate exercise.

Morgenthau begins his discussion by formulating six basic principles of realism.

1. Realism assumes that there are objective laws of politics that are based on a proper understanding of immutable human nature. It is possible to construct a rational theory of politics using these laws, a theory that will have real explanatory and predictive power. This first principle of Morgenthau's realism is essentially an assumption on which all the other principles are based. This fact hardly invalidates Morgenthau's realism as a relevant and accurate interpretation of international relations, but it does underline the speculative nature of international relations theory. The "objective laws"[10] of human nature on which realists build are derived from a particular reading of world history and politics. This interpretation cannot be proven to be accurate or inaccurate, at least not in any scientifically-

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.,p.4.

definitive way.

2. "The main signpost that helps political realism to find its way through the landscape of international politics is the concept of interest defined in terms of power." (5) Morgenthau asserts that all nations and statesmen act to maximize national power so as to better pursue national interests. He falls back on the examples of history to show that all major political conflicts are reducible to this basic formula. This guiding principle of international relations helps the realist get away from what Morgenthau perceives as "... two popular fallacies: the concern with motives and the concern with ideological preferences".[11] In Morgenthau's view, the personal motives and ideological pronouncements of statesmen are, at best, distractions from a state's necessary and continual race to accumulate power.

3. Realism accepts that the pursuit of individual and national interests is the defining characteristic of political action. What constitutes those interests is dependent on the political and cultural realities of the day, but political problems are the result of competing interests.

4. States are not subject to universal moral standards, but are required to do whatever is necessary in order to survive. This does not mean that states are totally unconcerned with morality, but morality is important only insofar as it influences the outcome of successful political action. Prudence -"the weighing

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[11] Ibid., p.5.

of the consequences of alternative political actions"[12] - is the highest political virtue.

5. Realism never universalizes the national aspirations of any particular nation. Nationalistic/ideological convictions lead to unnecessary and unnecessarily destructive wars and conflicts. Viewing all nations "... as political entities pursuing their respective interests defined in terms of power..."[13] allows statesmen to judge different nations as they would evaluate their own and leads to moderation of thought and action.

6. For realists the primary political question is "How does this policy affect the power of the nation?". The realist rejects the application of inappropriate modes of thought to the practice of politics, that is, thought which does not accept the pursuit of power and national interest as being the ultimate goal of all nation states.

"Political man" is, essentially, a creature who conducts himself according to the realist principles described above. Realists acknowledge the existence of "pluralist man", but the attempt to construct a working theory of politics requires that the realist focus be on "political man" and his particular characteristics.

It should be noted that all these principles are concerned with emphasizing the pursuit of power and interests, the defining characteristics of realism. At the same time, most of these

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[12] Ibid., p.10.

[13] Ibid., p.11.

principles reject the influence of morality or ideology in determining state behavior. But can realism deny the importance of international morality and still claim to describe international political reality, or is it seeking to prescribe what that reality should be? Before dealing with how this attempt to deny morality constitutes a fundamental problem for realism, I will first examine the strengths of the realist approach.

Complex Interdependence: A Different Form of Realism?

Hersch Lauterpacht characterizes "realism" with the following terms:

> ...appeal to so-called realism is an inducement to facile and complacent thinking; ...as a method of argument and discussion it may often be, in effect, open to the charge of being intellectually dishonest;...it is a convenient and much abused cloak for opportunism or worse;...it has tended to treat with contempt long-range principle as a standard of human action and to deny the value of human will as an agency shaping the destiny of men.[14]

Lauterpacht's criticisms of realism are, to an extent, perfectly valid. Certainly critics of realism have repeated these same charges with equal fervor up to the present day. What Lauterpacht is referring to, however, is a severely restricted concept of how realism is practiced, rather than what it can be. As I shall try to demonstrate in the discussion to follow, realism does not have to be the narrow and self-serving

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[14] Hersch Lauterpacht, "On Realism, Especially in International Relations", International Law: Volume II, The Law of Peace, Part I,(Cambridge, Cambridge University Press,1975), p.53.

instrument that it is sometimes seen to be.

The conduct of international politics between most of the advanced countries of the world has changed considerably over the past forty years. Military force is a far less viable option in the settling of disputes; economic and social interaction has created new political realities. It is my contention that realism is fully capable of coping with these changes in the modern international system, most notably cooperative behaviour and non-violent interaction between states. The considerable scope of Morgenthau's realism is best illustrated by an example. The principles of realism expressed above are obviously applicable to the restrictive interpretations of realism that have been developed by critics in recent years, as in the case of Lauterpacht. However, Morgenthau's realism is equally capable of accommodating some of the same theories that claim to be anti-realist. An example of such a theory is complex interdependence.

The theory of complex interdependence was developed in the 1970s by Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye to describe and explain the new forces and relationships governing the modern international system. Keohane and Nye believe complex interdependence to be a necessary counterpoint to a realism incapable of explaining the observable, changing realities of world politics. Their theory was developed in response to Morgenthau's version of realism. They have interpreted Morgenthau's realism far too narrowly, however. Applying Morgenthau's principles of realism to the situations described by

Keohane and Nye makes it clear that, inherently, there is nothing in realism that precludes international cooperation or requires military conflict to be a perennial political problem. But Keohane and Nye do not see this. Rather, in their eyes, realism dismisses the influence on world unity of such 20th century phenomena as multinational corporations and the international economy, modern telecommunications, and advances in transportation as being of little relevance when evaluating the important political questions of the day. In reality, however, social, cultural, political and economic ties have created a situation for many states wherein the traditional preoccupations with military competition between states has no relevance. Thus, while Keohane and Nye do not question the historical validity of realist thought, they do question the universal applicability of realist principles.

Interdependence is a condition of mutual dependence between states. "Where there are reciprocal (although not necessarily symmetrical) costly effects of transactions, there is interdependence".[15] Interdependence always involves costs, and is characterized by a loss of some degree of sovereignty on the part of the interdependent partners. Whether or not the gains of the relationship outweigh the costs is dependent on the particular situation.

Interdependence also involves conflict between states as to

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[15] Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, Power and Interdependence, (Canada: Little, Brown and Company, 1977), p.9.

how power and advantage is distributed. States still pursue their own interests as far as they can in a situation of interdependence, but military force is not considered to be a viable option.

Keohane and Nye characterize realism as being defined by three primary assumptions. These are: states are the dominant actors in the world system; force is a viable instrument of policy; there is a hierarchy of issues in world politics, with "the 'high politics' of military security dominat(ing) the 'low politics' of economic and social affairs".[16] Complex interdependence is defined by three contrary characteristics: first, there are multiple channels of contact between nations. Intergovernmental, interstate, and transnational contacts all make governments and nations more sensitive and vulnerable to the interests of other nations. Second, there is no hierarchy of issues. Questions of military security are merely one of many pressing concerns which can dominate the international agenda at any time. Third, military force can play only a minor role in relations between interdependent states. Such a role would usually be limited to one of the political advantage gained by a militarily powerful nation which protects weaker allies, the obvious example being the relationship of the United States to other Western nations. Nonetheless, Keohane and Nye acknowledge that it is possible to conceive of situations of political upheaval wherein states that are nearly interdependent now might

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[16] Ibid., p.24.

resort to the use of force against each other in the future. At that time, the relationship would return to one governed by realist principles. They do not elaborate.

Under complex interdependence, the inapplicability of force and the powerful connections between transnational actors means that international relations becomes an area of extreme subtlety and sophistication. In this context, a nation's ability to engage in political bargaining becomes especially important. Under complex interdependence, the line between domestic and international politics becomes blurred, as domestic interest groups attempt to exert pressure on governments to adopt policies that will further the international interests of those domestic groups. The institutions within which international political bargaining takes place also increase greatly in importance. One of the significant effects of this political evolution is to greatly increase the potential power of relatively weak states. But are complex interdependence and realism really as different as Keohane and Nye would have us believe? The answer is "no".

It will be remembered that Keohane and Nye base their understanding of realism on their interpretation of Morgenthau. But have they properly interpreted Morgenthau's ideas? It does not appear that they have. Complex interdependence actually over-emphasizes the military aspect of realism. There is no question that realists have focused on the security relationship between states as being the primary areas of concern in international politics, but this is because throughout history

military issues have been the primary concern of the foreign policy of states. Questions of national security and state interest have been tied to considerations of power which have been manifested as the ability to muster coercive force. Realists are understood to believe that this same basic situation pertains today. The fact that realism may present a concise and accurate description of historical reality, however, does not mean that the theory can also automatically render immutable political principles. Simply because the conduct of world politics throughout human history has centred around military conflict does not mean that this pattern must inevitably continue.

There is no reason to believe that the six principles of realism advanced by Morgenthau do, in fact, lock realism into a world dominated by military concerns. Morgenthau's six principles focus, essentially, on the need for states to accumulate and utilize power in order to meet state interests. More concisely, these concepts can be understood to mean that states act on the basis of rational self-interest. There is no need to define any of the six principles in a solely military context.

This downplaying of the military aspect of realism does not appear to violate the realist consensus that the primary focus of international relations is on questions of war and peace. It can simply be argued that, at this point in time, realist theory must be more concerned with the subtleties of peace and less concerned

with the more familiar questions of war.

When the guiding principle of states is understood to be self-interest, there is actually very little in the real world that the supporters of complex interdependence can point to as being clear evidence of their theory in practice. States following realist principles are fully capable of engaging in highly cooperative behavior, so long as it is in the national interest to do so. Thus, the condition of complex interdependence that Keohane and Nye see as existing between First World nations can be described by realists as an arrangement which is recognized to be economically and militarily beneficial to all of the involved parties. The logic of self-interest has no difficulty in accepting, for example, the existence of binding economic relations between different nations. The loss of sovereignty that such relationships would undoubtedly entail could be tolerated on the grounds that such is a necessary price to pay in order to gain a net benefit for the nation and would be less harmful to the nation than the cost of severing the interdependent relationship. Even Morgenthau accepts that sovereignty can be ceded by one state to another, though he rejects the notion of divided sovereignty.[17]

Internationalists have long argued that the nation state is a rapidly-fading anachronism. The gradual absorption of the nation-state into larger world blocs is one of the predicted effects of complex interdependence. It can be argued, however,

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[17] Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, pp. 328-346.

that the operation of realist principles would make the evolution of a transnational world impossible . If national interest is fundamentally a concern with national survival then, in theory, every state should fight to maintain all meaningful sovereignty, even if doing so proved to be economically, politically or socially detrimental. In fact, however, there is really nothing in the realist canon that requires the nation-state to be a permanent fixture of the world order. The present international system has evolved around states, but other political units have dominated world politics (such as it was) in the past. Regardless of the nature of the political unit, realist principles of political conduct have always held. There is also nothing in Morgenthau's six principles of realism to indicate that states are a necessary part of realism. Holsti may be making a statement of fact when he asserts that realists view the state as being the dominant political unit in the international system, but he is not making a statement of necessity. If realism is an accurate approach to describing and predicting political interactions between groups of people, then its principles should apply regardless of the form of sovereign political unit dominating the political system. Thus, there is no reason that realism should not be able to accommodate the evolution of the nation-state system into some other form.

Having said this, it is still necessary to face the problem of how to understand the term "national interest". This is an important question, and one that I shall deal with more fully in

the next section. For now, it will be appropriate to view national interest as being what states understand to be necessary for them to do in order to maintain and further the social, political, and economic well-being of their citizens. If the prosperity and survival of the citizens can be enhanced through a political association other than the state, then many states will face the difficult choice of sacrificing sovereignty or holding on to national identity at the cost of the significant benefits to be found in some other, non-state political union. Whatever the final decision, realist principles are capable of explaining the logic leading to that decision - that is, the state will do what it perceives as being least costly and most acceptable to the citizens, whose perceived needs, ultimately, should define the national interest.

The fact that Morgenthau's conception of realism is remarkably flexible can be illustrated through a thorough examination of Politics Among Nations. The final section of the book is entitled "The Problem of Peace in the Mid-Twentieth Century: Peace Through Accommodation".[18] In this section, Morgenthau does not discount the possibility of world peace or even of the establishment of a world government. What he does do is argue that these kind of goals can only be achieved through the use of inventive and sensitive diplomacy. He advocates a return to the professional, non-ideological diplomacy of the nineteenth century. What he does discount is the power of

[18] Ibid., pp. 561-591.

cultural contact, political interaction, and economic ties to peacefully unite the planet. He disputes the efficacy of international organzations and international law and still believes that the nation-state has political primacy. In all of these respects, he differs from Keohane and Nye, though not always in significant ways.

Complex interdependence and realism are both able to accept the creation of a transnational world. Where they disagree is in the likelihood of such an event, as well as in the methods necessary to achieve such a goal. Complex interdependence asserts that unifying forces are now at work in the world, and seeks to describe interdependence as a significant and growing phenomenon of contemporary international relations. Nonetheless, the supposed departures from the realist portrayal of international conduct upon which Keohane and Nye base their theory are really well within the capacity of realist principles to explain.

For realism to accommodate complex interdependence requires that the realist apply the old realist principles in new and imaginative ways. This can be done without compromising the integrity of the most basic realist tenet: the principle of rational self-interest. In the contemporary world, the perception that violence will be most advantageous for the interests of the state is still very common. In many cases, this is, in fact, a correct impression. Nonetheless, many states have come to understand and accept the benefits to be gained from cooperative

behavior. These states still operate on the basis of self-interest, but contemporary influences decrease the efficacy of force and, consequently, increase the desirability of cooperative behavior.

Morgenthau's Realism and Ideology

Morgenthau's realism offers a powerful explanatory framework within which can be fit most of the conduct associated with international relations. What realism does not do, however, is offer an adequate evaluation of the influence of ideological and moral factors on the workings of the international system. This inadequacy is a fundamental flaw in the theory, and one which Bull avoids. As has already been noted (Chapter 1), Bull considers morality, and by extension ideology, to be highly influential and sometimes decisive factors in the behaviour of states and statesmen. Bull incorporates this understanding into his observations of the international system and uses it to more accurately portray the international system. This conflict between realism and Bull's understanding of international relations is best resolved by pointing out the contradictions within Morgenthau's realism itself. A comparison between Bull and Morgenthau's approaches is unnecessary.

Morgenthau gives ideology and international morality short-shrift when dealing with these concepts within the general theory of realism. But it becomes apparent that many of the actual international problems that he addresses would not exist or cannot be fully analyzed if allowance is not made for

ideological/moral factors. His own understanding of American foreign policy and its deficiencies, as well as Communist foreign policy, admits of a strong ideological/moral element.[19] This need to attach significant weight to ideology and morality is the strongest evidence that Bull's approach to international relations, as unrefined and sketchy as it might be, is a powerful and necessary theoretical alternative to traditional realism.

Before carrying this argument further it is necessary to understand how Morgenthau defines and describes the influence of ideology and morality on the international system.

Morgenthau offers a definition of ideology that "corresponds to what Karl Mannheim has called 'particular ideology'".[20] Mannheim regards ideologies

> ...as more or less conscious disguises of the real nature of a situation, the true recognition of which would not be in accord with (the) interests (of the opponent). These distortions range all the way from conscious lies to half-conscious and unwitting disguises; from calculated attempts to dupe others to self-deception....The study of ideologies has made it its task to unmask the more or less conscious deceptions and disguises of human interest groups, particularly those of political parties.[21]

This definition serves to clarify further Morgenthau's understanding of ideology, but is deliberately narrow, and allows no room for flexibility or further discussion. Morgenthau briefly mentions that ideology can serve "...a dual function in the

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[19] Hans Morgenthau, A New Foreign Policy for the United States,(London, Pall Mall Press, 1969).

[20] Morgenthau, Politics..., p.101.

[21] Ibid. Mannheim cited.

sphere of international politics."[22] One of those functions may be to define "...the ...goals of political action...-that is, those ultimate objectives for the realization of which political power is sought..." [23] Also, Morgenthau does understand ideology as consisting of "... philosophic, political, and moral convictions..."[24] But Morgenthau is deliberately focusing on the understanding of ideologies as "...the pretexts and false fronts behind which the element of power, inherent in all politics, is concealed."[25] Ultimately, ideologies are "...weapons in the struggle for power on the international scene".[26] Thus, "ideology" is made to fit into the general realist framework.

An alternative definition of "ideology", one which is much closer to the more common understanding of the term, is the following:

> Any systematic and all-embracing political doctrine which claims to give a complete and universally applicable theory of man and society, and to derive therefrom a programme of political action. An ideology in this sense seeks to embrace everything that is relevant to man's political condition, and to issue doctrine whenever doctrine would be influential in forming or changing that condition.[27]

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[22] Ibid., p.102.

[23] Ibid., pp.102-103.

[24] Ibid., p.101.

[25] Ibid., p.103.

[26] Ibid., p.104.

[27] Scruton, A Dictionary of Political Thought,(London: Pan Books, 1983), p.213.

This alternative definition of "ideology" is implicitly accepted by Morgenthau as being valid, even if it is not the definition on which he focuses. The definition cited above, however, actually applies very neatly to what Morgenthau calls "moral-political systems". Morgenthau does not get away from the wider conception of ideology; he calls it by a different name.

Morgenthau and International Morality

From the alternative definition of "ideology" offered above, it can be seen how ideology and morality can be considered as almost interchangeable concepts. "Moral" is commonly defined as:

> ...of or pertaining to character or disposition, considered good or bad, virtuous or vicious; of or pertaining to the distinction between right and wrong, or good and evil, in relation to the actions, volitions or character of responsible beings; ethical.[28]

"Morality" is understood to mean:

> ...a particular system of morals.[29]

Morality and ideology are both properly understood in terms of belief systems; that is, systems of values and rules of conduct which are truly and firmly held by the practitioner. Morgenthau's deliberately narrow definition of ideology does not allow for this, but his understanding of"international morality" is sufficiently broad so as to encompass the alternative definition of "ideology" noted above. In Morgenthau's view, international morality includes powerful nationalist ideals which

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[28] Oxford English Dictionary

[29] Ibid.

strongly affect the behaviour of states and statesmen. These ideals have the potential to contradict the principle of rational self-interest, or at least realist prescriptions of what rational self-interest should be. In other words, much of what Morgenthau calls "international morality" can be called "ideology" and likely would be defined as such by many other theorists. The disruptive influence of international morality, that would appear to undermine the highly rational and systematic approach to international relations advocated by realism, is introduced into the equation by Morgenthau himself, even though he does not explicitly recognize the conflict between his understanding of international morality and the theory of realism he espouses.

Morgenthau begins his description of international morality by first reiterating the role of ideology in concealing aspirations for power, then connecting ideology to morality:

> What is actually an aspiration for power, then, [Ideology] appears to be something different, something that is in harmony with the demands of reason, morality, and justice. The substance, of which the ideologies of international politics are but the reflection, is to be found in the normative order of morality, mores, and law.[30]

According to Morgenthau, "...the main function of...normative systems has been to keep aspirations for power within socially tolerable bounds."[31] This function is best illustrated in domestic societies where elaborate normative systems have been developed to mitigate the desire for power and to try to direct

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[30] Morgenthau, Politics..., p.243.

[31] Ibid., pp.243-244.

those acquisitive energies towards more socially-constructive ends.

International morality has the same function as domestic morality, but is of much lesser efficacy. Writes Morgenthau:

> A discussion of international morality must guard against the two extremes of either overrating the influence of ethics upon international politics or underestimating it by denying that statesmen and diplomats are moved by anything but considerations of material power.[32]

On one hand, Morgenthau notes, much has been written about what international morality should be, with little regard to what it actually can be. In addition, politicians cannot be taken at face value when they apply moral justifications to their actions. "It is pertinent to ask whether (their justifications) are mere ideologies concealing the true motives of actions or whether they express a genuine concern for the compliance of international policies with ethical standards."[33] On the other hand, diplomats and statesmen will not engage in simply any activity, without regard for morality, in order to further the interests of their states. According to Morgenthau:

> (Statesmen and diplomats) refuse to consider certain ends and to use certain means...not because in the light of expediency they appear impractical or unwise but because certain moral rules interpose an absolute barrier. Moral rules do not permit certain policies to be considered at all from the point of view of expediency. Certain things are not being done on moral grounds, even though it would be expedient to do them. Such ethical inhibitions operate in our time on

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[32] Ibid., p.248.

[33] Ibid.

different levels with different effectiveness.[34]

Morgenthau sees the moral restraints on the conduct of international affairs as being unique to the modern era, though precisely what the "modern era" encompasses is unclear. The most obvious example of international morality is the attitude taken toward the value of human life. Assassinations and the extermination of whole populations are examples of practices which were common in the past but can only be carried out surreptitiously in the twentieth century, he asserts. If discovered, these activities will be perceived as being aberrant and morally reprehensible. "What has changed", writes Morgenthau, "is the influence of civilization..."[35] Attempts to place legal limitations on war and the moral condemnation of war associated with the modern era are further examples of moral restraints on the conduct of foreign policy.

Morgenthau does recognize a kind of paradox in the development of international morality, however. While describing the gradual evolution of an international system which has served to place increasing moral restraints on the conduct of foreign affairs, he also recognizes that "...certain important factors in the present conditions of mankind point toward a definite weakening of those moral limitations."[36] Morgenthau points out that the gradual development of limited war - war engaging only

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[34] Ibid., p.249.

[35] Ibid., p.250.

[36] Ibid.,p.256.

the combatants - from total war - war involving whole nations - is what allowed the corresponding development of moral limitations on killing in war. With the modern slide back to a state of total war "...the moral limitations upon killing are observed to an ever lessening degree" and are, in fact, "...threatened with extinction."[37]

It might be fair to accuse Morgenthau of inconsistency. On the one hand, he cites the Kellogg-Briand Pact and alludes to the anti-Vietnam War protests as examples of an established sense of international morality.[38] A few pages later, he is listing all of the reasons as to why the modern era represents a dissolution of the international moral regime that has developed and, one might believe from his earlier examples, is still developing. Leaving aside this apparent contradiction, what is important to note is that Morgenthau is correct in both of his assessments. What he implies is that there are opposing forces at work affecting international morality. Accurately evaluating the status of international morality would require a detailed assessment of highly complex forces, not the least of these being the influence of domestic morality. This kind of evaluation, even if it were possible, would certainly make the construction of a parsimonious theory of international relations an impossibility.

This discussion relates directly to Morgenthau's conception

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[37] Ibid., p.257.

[38] Ibid., pp.255-256.

of the political man. Morgenthau fully recognizes that this idealized human, who operates on a principle of rational self-interest, exists only in theoretical constructions, and represents only one facet of real human nature.

> Recognizing that these different facets of human nature exist, political realism also recognizes that in order to understand one of them one has to deal with it on its own terms...if I want to understand "religious man", I must... abstract from the other aspects of human nature and deal with its religious aspect as if it were the only one...I must apply to the religious sphere the standards of thought appropriate to it, always remaining aware of the existence of other standards and their actual influence upon the religious qualities of man... It is exactly through such a process of emancipation from other standards of thought, and the development of one appropriate to its subject matter, that economics has developed as an autonomous theory of the economic activities of man. To contribute to a similar development in the field of politics is indeed the purpose of political realism.[39]

In this case, economics might not be a good example to use to support the realist position. Increasingly, economists themselves are beginning to question the relevance of their science when the quest for the perfect theory is taking them farther and farther away from economic and social reality.[40] Something similar may be happening in relation to realism. First, the actual influence of "moral man", another theoretical construct, on "political man" is not being fully considered. Second, it may be that the true "political man" cannot be reduced to his rational characteristics. Rather, he may necessarily have

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[39] Ibid., p.16.

[40] Robert Aaron Gordon, "Rigor and Relevance in a Changing Institutional Setting", The American Economic Review, (March 1976), 1-14.

to be an amalgamation of several different human facets if he is to assume theoretical relevance. Certainly Hedley Bull conceives of the political man as being a complex, multi-faceted entity who is as given to irrational as rational behaviour. Bull is less concerned than Morgenthau with developing theoretical constructs, but he also recognizes that politics is rarely a wholly rational undertaking. Attempting to treat it as such is to risk too great a departure from reality.

Morgenthau continues his description of international morality by noting that the logic of total war requires a deterioration of moral restraint. The need to destroy whole nations is partly caused, exacerbated, and facilitated by modern technology. In addition "...(t)he emotional involvement of the...masses..."[41] in the conduct of modern war worsens the situation. Writes Morgenthau:

> ...war in our time tends to revert to the religious type by becoming ideological in character. The citizen of a modern warring nation..."crusades" for an "ideal," a set of "principles," a "way of life," for which he claims a monopoly of truth and virtue. In consequence, he fights to the death or to "unconditional surrender" all those who adhere to another, a false and evil, "ideal" and "way of life." [42]

Seeing the struggle in these Manichean terms causes the citizen to see all of his opponents in the same light. No distinction is made between civilians and combatants; the moral duty to spare the enemy as a fellow human being "...is superseded by the moral

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[41] Morgenthau, Politics..., p. 258.

[42] Ibid.

duty to punish and to wipe off the face of the earth the professors and practitioners of evil."[43]

Morgenthau attributes the dissolution of the international ethical system that existed during the 17th and 18th centuries and, to a much lesser degree, up to the First World War, to two factors: "...the substitution of democratic for aristocratic responsibility in foreign affairs and the substitution of nationalistic standards of action for universal ones."[44]

The European international society was run by an aristocratic diplomatic service which cut across all national lines. This small diplomatic aristocracy "...liv(ed) by its own principles, customs, lights, and aspirations..." and "...preserv(ed) a quiet and permanent unity of its own"[45] despite conflicts that might have existed between states. The members of this corps served the same interests, possessed no great loyalty to any particular state, and considered bribery to be part of regular diplomatic negotiation. They had an interest in preserving the system and furthering its interests. War and diplomacy were conducted as matters of business; the diplomats placed reason far above passion, and thus could provide a stable system. It is the moral nature of this system that is of greatest interest to Morgenthau, however.

The moral standards of conduct with which the

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[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid., p.260.

[45] Ibid., p.262.

> international aristocracy complied were of necessity of a supranational character. They applied...to all men who by virtue of their birth and education were able to comprehend them and act in accordance with them. It was in the concept and the rules of natural law that this cosmopolitan society found the source of its precepts of morality. The individual members of this society, therefore, found themselves to be personally responsible for compliance with those moral rules of conduct; for it was to them as rational human beings, as individuals, that this moral code was addressed.[46]

This international morality was destroyed by the advent of democracy. In democracies, elected or appointed officials have replaced the traditional aristocracy. Answerable to an electorate, they are also susceptible to the vagaries of public opinion, both in the conduct of their policy and the security of their positions. Democracy means that governments feel no legal or moral responsibility to forces beyond their own national borders. Finally, the electorate itself consists of numerous competing factions which are governed by widely different principles in their reaction to the conduct of international relations, from jingoistic nationalism to idealistic internationalism to no supranational consciousness at all. These divisions may be reflected in government policy. To Morgenthau, the bottom line is that

> (m)oral rules operate within the consciences of individual men. Government by clearly identifiable men who can be held personally accountable for their acts, is therefore the precondition for the existence of an effective system of international ethics. Where responsibility for government is widely distributed among a great number of individuals with different conceptions as to what is morally required in international affairs, or with no such conceptions at

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[46] Ibid., p.263.

> all, international morality as an effective system of restraints upon international policy becomes impossible.[47]

The effect of nationalism was to bury the old system and with it the international morality that had obtained. The resulting creation of "...a multiplicity of morally self-sufficient national communities, which have ceased to operate within a common framework of moral precepts..."[48] has increased the tendency of nations to universalize their particular national morality. According to Morgenthau, individuals are "...strongly attached to the concept of universal ethics..." [49] but, due to the overwhelming influence of nationalistic forces, are unable to develop a true supranational consciousness. The resulting compromise is the inclination to universalize the nation's morality.

> ...(E)ach nation comes to know again a universal morality - that is, its own national morality - which is taken to be the one that all the other nations ought to accept as their own. The universality of an ethic to which all nations adhere is replaced by the particularity of national ethics which claims the right to, and aspires toward, universal recognition. There are then potentially as many ethical codes claiming universality as there are politically dynamic nations.[50]

The nature of international conflict changes. Wars are fought and justified in the name of universal morality;

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[47] Ibid., p.266.

[48] Ibid., p.268.

[49] Ibid., p.271.

[50] Ibid.

compromise is almost impossible.

> Thus, the stage is set for a contest among nations whose stakes are no longer their relative positions within a political and moral system accepted by all, but the ability to impose upon the other contestants a new universal political and moral system recreated in the image of the victorious nation's political and moral convictions.[51]

Morgenthau raises a number of contenticus points that should be quickly addressed. Morgenthau's insistence that democracy undermines the sense of individual conscience needed by statesmen for the application of international morality is highly debatable. In his criticism of E.H. Carr's conception of international morality, Lauterpacht asserts that individual statesmen in a democracy are considered by their own people to be personally morally responsible for the acts that they commit on behalf of their state.[52] Martin Wight recounts an incident at the Teheran Conference where Churchill refused to accede to Stalin's demands that the fifty-thousand member German General Staff be shot. According to Wight

> The incident in Teheran shows...that political ethics have their ultimate sanction in the personal ethics of the politician, and a nation's honour cannot rise higher than the personal honour of its representatives.[53]

Individual conscience, it seems, can play a role even in democracies.

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[51] Ibid.

[52] Hersch Lauterpacht, "Professor Carr on International Morality", International Law, pp. 70-71.

[53] Martin Wight, "Western Values in International Relations", Diplomatic Investigations, ed. Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1968), p.128.

Decrying the perception that the spread of democracy has undermined the international diplomatic culture is a further mark against Morgenthau's realism. The establishment of democratic states is becoming more common in the modern world. If realism cannot cope with this trend, then the validity of the theory is further called into question.

International Morality Versus Realism

The most striking element of the above discussion is the considerable significance that Morgenthau places upon morality, both domestic and international, and the role that it plays in the conduct of international relations. The second most striking fact is that, by his own design, Morgenthau's concept of realism cannot deal with this fundamental aspect of international relations. As a result, serious doubts are cast on the ability of Morgenthau's realism to provide effective explanations of significant political developments. In the end, it becomes apparent that realism is more an idealization of the way the international system should work than it is a valid theoretical description of the way international politics actually functions.

Even though he does not ignore morality as a factor in the conduct of international relations, Morgenthau virtually ignores morality as a factor in the construction of realist theory. It is difficult to understand how Morgenthau can justify this decision; by his own account, morality has always played a leading role in the international system, be it the diplomatic, cosmopolitan morality that he favours, or the nationalistic

ideologies that he fears. Given this fact, the question to be answered is "has Morgenthau's realism, by failing to deal with morality, sacrificed relevance in order to be rational?" The answer appears to be "yes".

While it is true that Morgenthau's realism attempts to deny any theoretical relevance to moral/ideological factors, the theory must be distinguished from the philosophical considerations and assumptions on which Morgenthau built his realism. Morgenthau is not silent on the question of morality and ideology in international relations; his concerns with these subjects extend beyond a simple assertion that they should not influence the conduct of states. Rather, Morgenthau's conception of morality stems from his understanding of human nature and the general relationship between morality and politics.

As described by Michael Joseph Smith, Morgenthau believes human nature to be inherently "evil"; there is an innate desire for power in every human being which shapes individual action. Reflecting this reality, politics itself is inevitably evil and thus is incompatible with ethical behavior. Even so, Morgenthau recognizes the necessity of morality and seeks to reconcile ethical behavior with politics. He rejects a "dual standard" of morality which would resolve this conflict by rendering politics morally inferior to private sphere activities. Such a solution to the problem, he feels, would legitimate a view of "politics (as) the seat of all irrationality and evil" while perpetuating the myth that individual morality can be separated from, and is

superior to, politics.[54] This solution is undesirable because it allows people to avoid facing the unpleasant and messy truths of politics. It breeds an unrealistic understanding of morality itself.

Morgenthau resolves this dilemma by offering an "ethics of the lesser evil".[55]

> To act successfully, that is, according to the rules of the political art, is political wisdom. To know with despair that the political act is inevitably evil and to act nevertheless is moral courage. To choose among several expedient actions the least evil one is moral judgment. In the combination of political wisdom, moral courage, and moral judgment, man reconciles his political nature with his moral destiny.[56]

The moral criteria used to determine how a statesman should act are unclear. According to Smith, Morgenthau intuitively believes in the existence of transcendent moral principles which apply to all people and states, but he does not believe that they serve as effective restraints on the conduct of states.[57] Thus, in the construction of his theory of international relations, Morgenthau accords these moral principles no practical weight and defines political ethics as being relevant only in relation to political consequences that they yield. As Smith points out, however, this

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[54] Hans Morgenthau, Scientific Man Vs. Power Politics, p.187. Cited by Smith, Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger, p.138.

[55] Smith, Realist Thought..., p.139.

[56] Hans Morgenthau, Scientific Man..., p.203. Cited by Smith, p.139.

[57] In this respect, his position is remarkably similar to that of Bull, as shall be examined in the next chapter.

approach creates a "dual standard" which separates politics from morality, precisely the kind of arrangement that Morgenthau abhors. Smith argues that Morgenthau attempts to resolve this inconsistency by using the fundamental concept of the state pursuit of "national interest defined in terms of power". It is Morgenthau's assertion that when states pursue their own interests, properly defined, they will naturally come to pursue policies of moderation in relation to other states. This is because when a state's policies are not distorted by extraneous moral considerations, its policies are naturally inclined towards being moderate. Thus, the pursuit of power and interest leads to moderate state policies which contribute to the creation of a more beneficial and stable international system.

This concept is described as the "moral dignity of the national interest" and is tied into Morgenthau's conception of the relationship between morality and the state.[58] Morgenthau believes that morality can only exist within national states. It is only in such a setting that the institutions and attitudes necessary to preserve morality can develop. Thus, if the state is the only body within which morality can be protected and promoted, then the policy of pursuing the national interest in order to preserve that state is necessarily moral.

Morgenthau's approach to the moral questions of international relations may be open to criticism, but for now all that really concerns me is the fact that he did, indeed, regard

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[58] Smith, Realist Thought..., p. 147.

these questions as being worthy of detailed study. That he put considerable effort into defining his approach to morality does not, in the end, excuse his attempt to exclude moral factors from a place in his theory of realism.

Morgenthau's explanation of morality is subject to many kinds of criticism, but it is his stand on the concept of the "national interest" that is weakest. The fact that major political forces of the modern world are portrayed by Morgenthau as being outside the sphere of realist interpretation raises serious questions about the perception of state interests. This returns to the earlier discussion on the question of how nations define their national interests. Fundamental to realism is the principle that nations will act to obtain power so as to pursue their interests. Precisely how those interests are determined is never adequately explained by Morgenthau, but he strongly implies the decisive influence of moral-political factors:

> ...the kind of interest determining political action in a particular period of history depends upon the political and cultural context within which foreign policy is formulated. The goals that might be pursued by nations in their foreign policy can run the whole gamut of objectives any nation has ever pursued or might possibly pursue.[59]

Presumably, "the political and cultural context" can be understood as the moral-political system of a state. What is unclear, however, is how far state policy can be influenced by moral considerations before power considerations become paramount.

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[59] Morgenthau, Politics..., p.11.

There is, of course, the essential problem of defining exactly what constitutes the "national interest". In Morgenthau's realism, the pursuit of power is necessary in order to meet the needs of the national interest, but the definition of this term is really not very clear. It would seem apparent that some bare minimum set of principles must be held by all nations as constituting the basic tenets of national interest. What is necessary to ensure the survival of the state would probably be the guiding principle of all deliberate state action. There are problems with even this understanding of national interest, however. Large states, secure in their own power, have interests far beyond a preoccupation with survival. In many situations, powerful nations take on such extensive responsibilities and define their interests so broadly that "national interest" becomes nothing more than a catch-all term for whatever policy the government of the day wishes to pursue.

According to Smith, Morgenthau believes that the national interest of a state can be determined by "objective analysis".[60] The national interest can always be obtained through "scientific analysis"; "(t)he national interest can always be defined rationally even if that rational definition does not always prevail in concrete foreign policy".[61] When this rationally-defined national interest does prevail, however, the result is prudent and moderate foreign policy, resulting in a more moderate

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[60] Smith, Realist Thought..., p.154.

[61] Ibid., pp.154-155.

state system. The problem, of course, remains deciding how to determine what that rationally-defined national interest is. If it is an objective reality that must be ascertained, then what are the criteria that should be used to fulfill this function?

Smith takes the position that "for all his wisdom and subtlety, Morgenthau did not succeed in establishing the national interest as an objective standard, let alone one possessed of moral dignity."[62]

> Morgenthau never squarely faced the problem of defining the actual content of the national interest in democratic and ideological states...The concept of the national interst simply cannot bear the weight Morgenthau assigned to it. It is not "objective" as Morgenthau's own hesitations about its translation into policy demonstrate. Rather it is a value itself defined by different - albeit sometimes characteristic - hierarchies of values...How one defines the national interest depends on the values he espouses and the way he ranks them...The national interest is not automatically moral; nor does it lead necessarily to international moderation. Instead of insisting on the objective and moral quality of the national interest and on the irrelevance of overarching moral considerations in its definition, Morgenthau would have done better to explicate and defend the values that informed his own understanding of the American national interest.[63]

Thus, Smith sees the inescapable role of morality in defining the national interest.

By Morgenthau's own account, the influence of moral-political factors on the functioning of the international system is profound. Communism and democracy (the distinctions are Morgenthau's) are moral-political systems. Conflict between

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[62] Ibid., p.158.

[63] Ibid., pp.160-161.

these competing systems plays a role in most modern international strife. These moral-political systems are not bound to follow realist principles and might cause states to act in accordance with ideals and to pursue policies or take actions that are incompatible with realism. In fact, Morgenthau recognizes the extra-realist tendencies of Communism and democracy. The Cold War, he says, "...has been a conflict not only between two world powers but also between two secular religions"[64] with all of the characteristics attached to religious conflict. The Americans, he argues, have reduced their foreign policy to a simplistic anti-Communist "moral crusade".[65]

Morgenthau's assessment of Communism is more inconsistent. He refers to Marxism-Leninism as a "dogma, a body of pseudo-theological propositions" which is required to be successful in its predictions and actions in order to maintain the faith of its adherents.[66] Men like Lenin and Khruschev, if not Stalin, sincerely believed in the validity of their moral code and followed its precepts as far as they were able to, and as far as realist considerations allowed them. On the other hand, "(f)or Stalin and his successors in particular, Communism was first of all an ideological means to the traditional ends of imperial Russia", thereby putting the nature of Soviet foreign policy into

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[64] Morgenthau, A New Foreign Policy For the United States, p.120.

[65] Ibid., p.16.

[66] Ibid., p.35.

a realist framework.[67]

It is clear that moral factors can seriously distort and obscure realist prescriptions for foreign policy, and for Morgenthau the most obvious example of this situation is the Vietnam War. Morgenthau was very opposed to American involvement in Vietnam, believing it to be the result of applying outdated and inappropriate principles and policies to situations for which they were never developed. On the basis of faulty assumptions and a profound misunderstanding of what was really going on, Americans were unable to realistically assess their chances of military success, and were equally unable to accurately determine American interests.

Morgenthau attributed the inability of the American government to properly perceive its interests to the failure of three specific qualities: intellectual understanding, political judgment, and moral standards. The failure of intellectual understanding was, essentially, the failure of political theory and historical analysis; lack of political judgment concerned misunderstandings of "...the nature of Communism, of revolution, and of limited war."[68] Of particular interest is the failure of moral standards, to which Morgenthau attaches the ultimate responsibility for the perpetuation of the errors in intellectual understanding and political judgment. Morality, in his assessment, failed the United States in a number of areas. It

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[67] Ibid., p.148.

[68] Ibid., p.148.

failed with a government that constructed a politically popular foreign policy, and then mobilized to crush any dissenting voices; it failed with a bureaucracy and academic community which refused to publicly condemn government actions and, instead, joined the government bandwagon. Finally, Morgenthau attributes the government's refusal to tolerate dissent and reevaluate its policies to "...the sin of pride", specifically the pride of Lyndon B. Johnson.[69] Morgenthau asserts that such an extreme influence of personality traits on foreign policy was unique, but, ultimately, the refusal of Johnson to admit when he was wrong and, in fact, to become "the first American president to lose a war" was responsible for the continuing Vietnam fiasco.[70]

Morgenthau's description of the Vietnam War raises interesting questions about realism. First, the realist claim to be a reasonable depiction of international reality is called into question. It appears that the application of realist principles to foreign policy is contingent on a "proper" understanding of the international system amd does not happen automatically. What the system requires, apparently, is far from being obvious and is subject to many distorting factors, not the least being inaccurate political theories and worldviews. The disagreements among realists themselves illustrates this point. Morgenthau and other established realists used their theories to decide their opposition to the Vietnam War. Henry Kissinger, a realist in a

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[69] Ibid., p.155.

[70] Ibid., p.156.

position of power, consciously applied his own conception of realist principles to continue and exacerbate the war. These disagreements between realists may indicate a theoretical failure of realism, or the different decisions may reflect different personal values. Either way, they prove that even "rational" analyses of state interests (if such is possible) do not always yield the same results.

Second, the influence of personalities, even if an aberration, is a significant admission. If Lyndon Johnson's personality had such an effect on the continuation of the war, why should similar situations not occur again, or be occurring now? Why should it be accepted that the Johnson case is an aberration?

It may be that Morgenthau's theory of realism is more appropriate for the period of international relations characteristic of the nineteenth century, when a true international morality existed. At that time, the shared values, customs and interests of the diplomatic community certainly made the application and validity of rational realist principles far less contentious than in the ideologically-polarized world of the twentieth century. This analysis is supported by the fact of Morgenthau's advocacy of the reinstitution of the old system of diplomacy as a possible route to world peace and his dislike of the influence of democratic institutions on the conduct of international relations. Despite the fact that realist principles are supposed to have universal application, Morgenthau

implicitly recognizes that they function best under particular conditions, conditions that do not exist in the contemporary world.

Many of these observations are supported by Michael Joseph Smith. Smith also centers on Morgenthau's deficiencies in evaluating and accounting for the influence of morality on international relations as being the primary source of the difficulties involved in Morgenthau's realism. Whereas I have criticized Morgenthau on the basis of his expressed theory, Smith focuses on the thought leading to the development of the theory. But he arrives at many of the same conclusions. He accuses Morgenthau of failing to account for "the importance of the circumstances in which moral decisions are made" by insisting on a universal standard of morality.[71] He believes that this deficiency is a result of Morgenthau's oversimplified view of politics as being no more than a reflection of the universal lust for power. Morgenthau's simplification, he believes, does not allow for the reality of circumstances which may force good people into evil actions or act as constraints on the behavior of evil people. This simplification means that Morgenthau "has virtually nothing to say about the complicated ways individual people and the societies they live in define their ends."[72]

Smith also recognizes the somewhat anachronistic character of Morgenthau's realism and its assertion that the pursuit of the

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[71] Smith, Realist Thought..., p. 162.

[72] Ibid., p.162.

national interest can lead to policies of moderation.

> The implicit ideal of Morgenthau's system was the nineteenth-century balance of power, a system whose moderation was based on restraint, shared conservative values, and belief in an underlying harmony of interests. The only way to make sense of Morgenthau's expectation of international moderation from policies based on the national interest is to assert the continued existence of these factors - an assertion Morgenthau explicitly denies.[73]

A final and fundamental problem that Smith focuses on is Morgenthau's assertion of a "rock bottom of morality common to all people and ages."[74] Morgenthau extrapolates the existence of such a morality from the fact that the moral ideas of philosophers throughout history and across cultures are acceptable to the moral and political sensibilities of today. As Smith points out, however, Morgenthau does not extend this analysis to all philosophies. He believes, for example, that liberalism is particular to its time and place, being "intimately connected with the rise of the middle class."[75] By contrast, Morgenthau's own "Burkean traditionalism and moral certainty" have been accorded a special status within his own thought.[76] Morgenthau's personal view of the world is understood to be unaffected by circumstances of time or place. This is not surprising nor is it necessarily an incorrect interpretation of

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[73] Ibid.,pp. 162-163.

[74] Ibid., p. 163.

[75] Smith, p. 163, citing Morgenthau from "The Tragedy of German-Jewish Liberalism".

[76] Smith, Realist Thought..., p.163.

reality. Morgenthau may, in fact, have had a firmer grasp on the universal truths of politics than most other observers. Nonetheless, these assertions are not proven, leading Smith to the following conclusions:

> ...(N)ot only does Morgenthau's definition of the political ethic reflect his preoccupation with an idealized balance of power, but his account of a supposedly universal ethic, an ultimate standard of moral judgment, rests on his own assumptions of an inescapable animus dominandi, and his conviction that only a profoundly conservative - indeed, morally authoritarian - society is capable of taming this lust for power and making a relatively peaceful social life possible. These assumptions are normative. Morgenthau's realism therefore stands or falls on ethical ground - on the persuasiveness of his personal moral choices.[77]

Some of Smith's conclusions might be open for debate, but his essential point - that Morgenthau's realism is based on his personal morality - is an assertion with which I must agree, especially in regards to the definition of "national interest".

In summation, I have tried to demonstrate that, despite the attempt of Morgenthau's realism to deny the validity of moral/ideological forces in the operation of international relations, the influence of these forces is impossible to ignore. Morgenthau recognizes these forces as forms of nationalistic ideologies; in order for his theory to have validity he must deal with them. The fact that he does not deal with these forces does create a situation of uncertainty for his theory of realism. Beyond these theoretical considerations, Morgenthau's overall concern with realism did have as one of its objectives a

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[77] Ibid.

formulation of the place of morality in international politics. The arguments that Morgenthau advanced to deal with this question also reveal his necessary preoccupation with morality. In short, these moral questions are hardly irrelevant to the study of international relations; they are, instead, possibly the most important elements to be considered.

Conclusion

Realism offers many profound insights into the perennial workings of the international system. Its principles are intelligent guidelines to be followed in the corstruction of any international relations theory. Understanding state action in the terms of interest defined as power and rational self-interest has proven to be a historically accurate way of conceptualizing the international system. However, to recognize that states will pursue their own interests is not enough; determining how those interests are formed is equally important. From the 17th century until its demise prior to the First World War, an international system existed wherein the dominant states, due to shared values and perceptions, could not help but define their interests in the same way. By contrast, the experience of the 20th century has been that competing moral-political systems often lead their adherents to define their respective national interests quite differently. This does not mean that politically different states follow completely dissimilar policies; this is obviously not the case. Rather, nations do share basic common interests. When states have the capacity or the need to define their

interests more broadly, however, the impact of different moral-political ideals is felt. The Vietnam War is an example of this situation. American national survival was never at stake in Vietnam; basic interests were not threatened. What were supposedly threatened were peripheral interests which were only believed to exist because of political considerations and inaccurate assumptions that had little relationship to the actual situation. Yet the Vietnam War, despite its objective lack of importance to the United States, ended up being a war that had profound influence on the conduct, if not the content, of American foreign policy.

Thus, in light of the proven importance of morality and ideology, the failure of Morgenthau's realism to deal adequately with these factors constitutes a fundmental flaw in the theory. It might be assumed that implicit in this argument is the conclusion that a rational theory of international relations cannot exist. This does not have to be the case. As noted above, realism offers general principles which are clearly based in reality. The danger lies in attempting to assign more rationality and commonality of interests to states than can be justified.

Hedley Bull did not make this kind of error when conducting his own studies of the international system. It appears that Bull's assessment of the international system is more reflective of reality than that of Morgenthau.

> Instances of departure from... rational behaviour are treated, in the realists' works, as aberrations.

> Hedley Bull was no believer in the ordinary rationality of states, nor in the usefulness of developing prescriptions for rational action, because he was even more pessimistic than the realists. To them, departures from the norm are exceptions; to Hedley Bull, stupidity, folly, miscalculations and mischief were always possible.[78]

Despite his apparent pessimism, Bull did consider the international system to be full of possibilities and he did recognize the power and influence of ideas and beliefs on the evolution of international society. Nonetheless, Bull's approach to international relations makes the construction of a parsimonious theory of international relations all but impossible; he does not allow for the simplification of international phenomena.

What is most important is the reality of moral and ideological influences on international relations. What this means is that it is conceivable that state behaviour could be heavily influenced by a properly constructed international justice. What remains to be shown is that Bull's version of international justice is truly plausible.

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[78] Stanley Hoffman, "Hedley Bull and His Contribution to International Relations", International Relations, (v. 62, #2, Spring 1986), 180.

CHAPTER THREE: JUSTICE IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Introduction

The link between justice and morality in Bull's thought is more complicated than it might first appear. It is clear that Bull sees moral factors as playing a significant role in international affairs. In this respect, he is in agreement with the idealists. However, he differs considerably from the idealist position when discussing the application of international morality. In an important sense, Bull sees international morality as the product of politics, history, and society. It is something that can vary from time to time and place to place and is dependent upon what nations believe. Thus, when constructing an argument for international morality, Bull does not make an appeal to some overarching universal system of values. Instead, he depends upon an international consensus as to what is morally acceptable and unacceptable to form the backbone for international justice. But he uses self-interest to support the argument for justice. He argues that the existing unjust condition of the international system is untenable and will lead to the destruction of world order if it is not made more receptive to the demands of the developing world; that is, if it is not made more just.

This chapter will focus on three specific problems. First, I will discuss why Bull sees international justice as being indispensable to the survival of the international system; second, as an extension of the first point, I will attempt to

explain how Bull defines "international justice" and how he connects this concept to international morality; lastly, I will critique his argument for the necessity of justice and attempt to show that, in this instance at least, Bull's argument is rather weak. Bull's insistence that international order is threatened by the lack of justice in international politics is, I contend, based on a misreading of the existing international system. The plausibility of the international justice that Bull advocates becoming a reality is a question that I shall fully address in the next chapter, where it can be considered from within the context of the international society.

The Importance of Justice

Bull's understanding of international justice as a moral concept is the basis of this thesis; the importance of morality to international relations and to Bull's thought has been emphasized throughout the past two chapters. It is important to understand, however, that Bull does not base his argument for the necessity of justice on a moral foundation, nor does he claim to be an advocate of international justice for moral reasons. Rather, it is Bull's contention that an international justice rooted in morality is absolutely necessary for reasons of international order. If the existing international system and world order are to be maintained, then Bull believes that there must be justice between states. Thus, Bull appeals to one of the most basic and widely-accepted realist principles to advance his cause: the principle of self-interest.

Bull's argument is quite basic. The international system, he points out, maintains world order and allows beneficial interactions between states. The existing world system, however, is one of enormous disparities in economic and social well-being between the advanced nations (most of them of the Western bloc) and most of the other countries of the world. Bull argues that the pressure created by the demands of the world's have-nots for a more equitable distribution of international power and wealth has the potential to seriously disrupt the existing state system if those demands are not met. If the great majority of the world's states come to believe that the present international system does not and cannot work to their benefit, then they will see no reason to continue to participate in it. As Bull notes, the present arrangement is beneficial to the West, and does preserve the condition of order that is necessary for Western prosperity, especially within the context of an increasingly interdependent and interconnected modern world. Thus, it is in the best interests of the developed world to accede to the demands for justice emanating from the Third World in order to preserve the legitimacy of the system and maintain international order.

In Bull's assessment, the distribution of power and influence in the world is presently changing through the operation of forces beyond any nation's control. An erosion of Western power is inevitable. Western actions must be aimed at minimizing the tension, conflict and instability that will result

from these changes by accepting them. What remains to be determined is how far the West must go toward accommodating the rest of the world, and the content of the justice that will be acceptable to all sides.

The fact that Bull does not attempt to build his argument for international justice on a strictly moral foundation differentiates his approach from that of many other international relations theorists. Charles Beitz, for example, has attempted to demonstrate that interdependence between states creates moral obligations of justice between those states.[1] Bull avoids these kind of arguments, but this does not mean that he does not have moral preferences regarding the development of international relations; he certainly does. But Bull recognizes a distinction between morality as it is commonly understood and morality as it should be understood according to universal standards or his own preferences. This is a subject that I will deal with more thoroughly in the next section.

The Definition of "Justice"

It is clear that Bull considers justice and morality to be inextricably-linked concepts, though exactly how the two concepts are related and how they are defined is less clear. In the following discussion, I shall deal with these questions by first explaining how Bull understands "justice". He identifies three different kinds of "justice" functioning in the contemporary

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[1] Charles Beitz, Political Theory and International Relations (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

world; he builds on these to construct the "international justice" which he feels is necessary for the maintenance of the international system. Before delving too deeply into the details of this international justice, however, I will discuss how Bull understands the relationship of justice to morality.

Bull explains his approach to the concept of justice as follows:

> I do not propose to set out any private vision of what just conduct in world politics would be, nor to embark upon any philosophical analysis of the criteria for recognising it. My starting-point is simply that there are certain ideas or beliefs as to what justice involves in world politics, and that demands formulated in the name of these ideas play a role in the course of events.[2]

He clarifies this point by explicitly identifying the moral nature of justice: "(c)learly, ideas about justice belong to the class of moral ideas, ideas which treat human actions as right in themselves and not merely as a means to an end, as categorically and not merely hypothetically imperative."[3] That is, justice is a moral concept that has strength and meaning beyond, simply, its political utility, but Bull does not attempt to specify what the moral content of this justice should be. Thus, at this point, it appears that justice and morality have a significance beyond politics, but the only standards against which they can be measured are determined by convention.

Bull appears to define "international justice" as being

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[2] Hedley Bull, The Anarchical Society, (London: MacMillan, 1977), p.78.

[3] Ibid.

little more than a moral consensus between nations. There is reason to believe that his understanding of the relationship is more sophisticated, however. In discussing human rights, Bull writes

> (t)he validity of our beliefs about human rights does not depend on the amount of consensus that exists in favour of them: legal rules may be valid only if they are based on consent or consensus, but moral rules are not.[4]

Thus, it is clear that Bull sees morality, and by implication justice, as existing independently of consensus. This position can be reconciled with his other statements portraying justice as a product of international consensus by recognizing that Bull's approach to morality and justice involves two dimensions. On one level, he sees these concepts as having political efficacy on the basis of what they are perceived to be by the nations of the world; but on another level, Bull accepts that universal standards of justice and morality may exist. Whether or not he believes these can be identified, however, is less clear, and he certainly does not appear to have much faith in the effectiveness of abstract universal values in the real world. Thus, he constructs an "international justice" which, because it is based on an international consensus, is the best hope for world order but which has no necessary connection to any higher form of justice.

This difference between the practical and the ideal

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[4] Hedley Bull, "The Universality of Human Rights", Millenium, (Autumn 1979), p.159.

underlines Bull's status as an observer of international affairs. Bull may believe in universal standards of morality and justice, but his analysis and prescriptions for the international system are informed by an understanding of the values on which states actually base their behaviours and, therefore, what is really possible within the system. States define justice on the basis of their own morality, which may have little connection to the universal ideal. This is a possibility that must be factored into any consideration of the international system. Bull pays little attention to abstract questions of what morality and justice should be; he is far more concerned with what they are and can be. Thus, throughout the remainder of this discussion, I will not discuss universal justice, of which Bull says very little anyway, but will focus on the practical justice that he is hoping to develop.

Bull identifies three types of justice which are applicable to politics in the modern world. These are: international justice; individual or human justice; and cosmopolitan or world justice. These concepts are the building blocks, to varying degrees, of the more idealized version of "international justice" which Bull feels must be attained by international society.

Bull defines international justice as "... the moral rules held to confer rights and duties upon states and nations..."[5] As examples of this concept, he offers the widely-accepted principles that states are "equally entitled to the rights of

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[5] Bull, The Anarchical Society, p.79.

sovereignty" and "all nations are equally entitled to the rights of national self-determination."[6] This "international justice" refers to no more than the ideals and practices to which the international community already claims to subscribe. The "international justice" which is the major concern of this project and to which Bull aspires is essentially a version of this original concept wherein the moral imperatives are far stronger.

States are the major actors in the international system. Thus, the concept of justice is used most often and with the greatest relevance in relation to states. Bull's basic contention is that "(e)very state maintains that it has certain rights and duties that are not merely legal in character but moral ..."[7] Thus, the rights of sovereignty and self-determination, and all the other rights and responsibilities associated with international conduct, are given a moral dimension: they should be obeyed and respected by all states because they are just. Bull's understanding of the status quo is different from the common realist perception, however, in that he believes that the morality of states is more than just another tool in the struggle for power. It is something real that is genuinely reflective of principles important to the state.

The second kind of justice discussed by Bull is individual or human justice. It recognizes the "moral rules conferring

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[6] Ibid., p.81.

[7] Ibid., p.82.

rights and duties upon individual human beings."[8] Concepts of individual justice provided the foundation for ideas of international justice and place the requirements of justice ahead of the requirements of international order. International justice has outgrown its roots, however, and is now most concerned with preserving that order. As a result, according to Bull, individual justice, "(f)ar from providing the basis from which ideas of international justice or morality are derived, ... has become potentially subversive of international society itself"[9].

States have an interest in maintaining their dominant position in the international system. Therefore, to acknowledge what Bull calls the "legitimate" claims that individual justice makes upon individual human beings could only serve to undermine the state position. First, accepting individual justice would be to cast doubt upon the demands that states make of their own citizens; if individuals have duties and responsibilities to their fellow humans, then their allegiance to the state may be questioned. Second, the power and legitimacy of the state would be further undermined if the state itself was seen to be negligent in honoring its own responsibilities to individual human beings outside of itself.

If states do not like to consider individual justice because of the fear of its ramifications, neither do they attempt to ignore it entirely. Bull notes that individual human rights are

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[8] Ibid., p.82.

[9] Ibid., p.83.

recognized in such practices as granting asylum to foreign refugees, and in such documents as the Atlantic Charter, the United Nations Charter, and the Declaration of Human Rights. The treatment of prisoners of war is another case of state recognition of individual rights. These examples are exceptions to the general practice, however. These kind of documents and conventions might be interpreted as expressions of principles, but their practical effectiveness in the operation of the system is very limited.

The final form of justice recognized by Bull is cosmopolitan or world justice. It is described by Bull as consisting of "ideas which seek to spell out what is right or good for the world as a whole, for an imagined civitas maxima or cosmopolitan society to which all individuals belong and to which their interests should be subordinate."[10] A cosmopolitan understanding of the "world common good" is concerned with "...the common ends or values of the universal society of all mankind, whose constituent members are individual human beings",[11] as opposed to the "common ends or values of the society of states"[12] or of individuals. This concept of justice views the world as a single unified society, with every human being a citizen of that society. Actions taken, for example, to promote minimum standards of international welfare, or to deal with ecological

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[10] Ibid., p.84.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

destruction are defended from the perspective that all people should act out of a sense of solidarity with the rest of humankind, not out of any appeal to the rights of individuals or the stability of the state system.

Of the three concepts of justice that Bull discusses, he puts least stock in cosmopolitan justice. Bull believes that the ideal of a world community "...does not exist except as an idea or myth which may one day become powerful, but has not done so yet."[13] Those who profess to speak on behalf of this non-existent world community cannot do so with any authority. They represent, at the most, a very small and particular segment of humanity; and their views are not the product of any political process of reconciliation and compromise. Assessing the nature of the "world common good" can only be discovered through a consideration of the opinions of states. Unfortunately, Bull argues, states and their representatives take very little notice of cosmopolitan justice, give virtually no consideration to the international community of humankind when formulating policy and, therefore, have little interest in the "world common good".

Concepts of international, individual, and cosmopolitan justice may exist within the international system, but they are of very different practical significance. Ideas of individual justice do find limited expression within some of the practices of the international system. The concept of cosmopolitan justice may enjoy some rhetorical support. But Bull sees both of these

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[13] Ibid., p.85.

concepts as being of very little effect within the actual system because the principles they espouse, were those principles followed, would come into direct conflict with the actual workings of the international system, as established by states and their interests. Implementing those principles would require states to perceive themselves and their obligations in a manner which is inconsistent with the actual functioning of the state system.

If individual and cosmopolitan justice are inherently incompatible with the reality of state domination within the international system, international justice is not.

> The structure of international coexistence... depends on norms or rules conferring rights and duties upon states - not necessarily moral rules, but procedural rules or rules of the game which in modern international society are stated in some cases in international law. Whereas ideas of world justice may seem entirely at odds with the structure of international society, and notions of human justice to entail a possible threat to its foundations, ideas of interstate and international justice may reinforce the compact of coexistence between states by adding a moral imperative to the imperatives of enlightened self-interest and of law on which it rests.[14]

Thus, international justice, as Bull understands it to exist in the contemporary world, adds a moral dimension to established international practices and principles. This extra dimension adds a weight of legitimacy to the international system that might not otherwise exist. Nonetheless, as Bull points out,

> ...international order is preserved by means which systemically affront the most basic and widely agreed principles of international justice... the institutions

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[14] Ibid., p.91.

> and mechanisms which sustained international order, even when they are working properly, indeed especially when they are working properly, or fulfilling their functions...necessarily violate ordinary notions of justice.[15]

As an example, he cites the "balance of power" a political institution which continues to play an integral role in the maintenance of the existing international system, yet which operates without regard for any considerations beyond preserving itself. To the balance of power, questions of justice are unimportant. Thus, the sovereignty and interests of smaller states are consistently violated by those states which control the balance. War, international law, and the roles of the great powers in the international system are, according to Bull, further examples of international institutions which fulfill functions or, in the case of international law, act to legitimize changes, that are often fundamentally at odds with the principles of international justice described by Bull. This injustice is inherent in the system. How to deal with this injustice is a question of great urgency for Bull and leads him to consider what are fundamental questions:

> Can justice in world politics, in its various senses, be achieved only by jeopardising international order? And if this is so, which should take priority?[16]

Bull identifies "three ideal-type doctrines"[17] which necessarily deal with these questions. The first is the conservative or

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[15] Ibid., p.91.

[16] Ibid., p.93.

[17] Ibid., p.93.

orthodox view which recognizes an unavoidable conflict between the demands of order and justice in international affairs. Second, there is the revolutionary view, which also recognizes an incompatibility between the existing order and justice, but which believes that the attaining of justice should be the foremost consideration. Revolutionaries believe in order, but it must be a just order, a criterion the present system cannot meet.

Finally, there is what Bull calls "the liberal or progressivist view", a position which [18]

> ...is reluctant to accept that there is any necessary conflict between order and justice in world politics, and is constantly seeking after ways of reconciling the one with the other... It is inclined to shy away from the recognition that justice in some cases cannot be brought about through processes of consent or consensus, to argue that attempts to achieve justice by disrupting order are counter-productive, to cajole the advocates of "order" and of "justice" into remaining within the bounds of a moral system that provides for both and permits an adjustment that can be mutually agreed.[19]

Liberals, writes Bull, believe that order and justice in the international political system are complementary values; each can be made to grow out of the other. Bull fully acknowledges that there are going to be many cases wherein order and justice are irreconcilable, even if liberals often refuse to recognize this. At the same time, however, he sees the liberal position as having considerable validity in many cases. A regime that wishes to maintain order must meet some kind of minimum requirement of

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[18] Ibid., p.94.

[19] Ibid., p.94.

justice, and those who demand justice must recognize the prior need for some kind of order if justice is to be a real possibility.

It is from the liberal position that Bull clarifies and expands his concept of consensual justice, the idea of justice as a moral consensus among states. Just change, he argues, can be effected without threatening the international order if there is agreement on the need for, and nature of, that just change. Consent to such change from all the involved parties is not required. What is necessary is an overwhelming international consensus, especially one which encompasses the major world powers. If this condition could be met, any threat to the world order that might result from change would be temporary, and the final result would likely be an even more stable international system. By contrast

> (t)he conflict between international order and demands for just change arises in those cases where there is no consensus as to what justice involves, and when to press the claims of justice is to re-open questions which the compact of coexistence requires to be treated as closed.[20]

When demands for justice are made in the absence of international consensus, the choice must be made between the demands of justice and the requirements of order. Bull acknowledges that order must be prior to justice, but he does not attempt to argue that order is always preferable to justice. Rather, he emphasizes the unavoidable influence of moral values

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[20] Ibid., p.95.

in determining how a state assesses questions of order versus justice. In Bull's judgment, the revolutionary places justice before order because the injustice that the revolutionary sees is too profound to be tolerated. By contrast, those who favor the status quo find the same situation to be morally acceptable, or at least not so morally unacceptable as to merit the disruption of the existing system. Writes Bull:

> ...the priority of order over justice cannot be asserted without some assessment of the question whether or not or to what extent injustice is embodied in the existing order...Those who are unwilling to jeopardise international order for the sake of anti-colonial or racial or economic justice reach their conclusions because of the assessments they make about justice as well as order whether the former are acknowledged or not.[21]

Thus, a nation's understanding of justice inevitably plays a role when making the choice between order and justice. This assertion is a comment on the quality of justice practiced by many nations, but it is also a recognition of what can be accomplished if the international perception of justice was to be made more harmonious.

Ultimately, Bull argues that what is understood and accepted to be "just change" within the world order will be dependent on how far that justice is compatible with the moral principles to which, Bull believes, nations profess to subscribe. Nations would be expected to conduct themselves in accordance with those principles of justice that are defined and accepted by the international community. Bull argues that the nature of the

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[21] Ibid., p.98.

international system has undergone a significant change, to the point where the self-interest of states demands that each state recognize its obligations to the international system itself. In practice, this may require states to adhere to international principles of morality of a far more stringent nature than is currently the case.

Bull's approach to the question of justice may be practical, but it raises difficult questions. If justice and international morality are no more than the results of international consensus, then what is the value of the term "justice"? Given that Bull puts so little stock in universal standards of justice, what is to prevent the international community from adopting a version of justice which validates attitudes and activities which would now be considered to be blatantly unjust? If there is a universal standard of morality, is its influence on the conduct of international relations really so negligible that it is rendered irrelevant?

It would be an oversimplification to say that Bull sees justice as little more than the codification of established practice. As has been discussed, Bull understands justice to be an inherently moral concept. He also understands that much of established international practice reflects the interests of the most powerful states, and may have little relation to justice. Nonetheless, Bull's inability to ground international justice in any higher standard of morality does leave his analysis open to the problems of absolute moral subjectivity, something for which

he criticizes E.H. Carr.[22] In theory, the international community could adopt any conception of justice that it desired and Bull would be unable to argue against it. He would be able to construct an argument based on universal moral standards but, in Bull's own interpretation, such an endeavor would be futile because of the irrelevance of such standards to the real world.

A realistic assessment might lead one to believe that there is little danger of the international community adopting a totally alien understanding of justice. The range of moral differences between human communities should not be exaggerated and the homogenizing effect of the spread of Western culture should not be overlooked. In addition, the incorporation of Western values into any future form of international justice should further mitigate any form of justice which is clearly repugnant to Western ideals.

The difficulties inherent in Bull's interpretation of justice are illustrated in his analysis of the relationship of the West to the apartheid regime in South Africa. Bull acknowledges that there is a double-standard applied to South Africa over its treatment of its non-white majority by the international community, so much of which is guilty of discrimination of its own. He explains this discrepancy in the following terms:

> If one cannot justify the application of a double standard to South Africa, one can at least explain why

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[22] Hedley Bull, "The Twenty Years' Crisis Thirty Years On", International Journal, (1969), 625-638.

> it is applied. It is a political fact that opposition to oppression of blacks by whites unites the world in a way in which other violations of human rights, including other kinds of racial oppression, do not. There is not a world consensus against communist oppression, or oppression by military governments, or of one Asian or African ethnic group by another, comparable to that which exists against this surviving symbol of a white supremacism that all other societies in the world, to different degrees and in different ways, have repudiated over the last three decades. The circumstances of recent history have made South Africa's particular violations of human rights more unacceptable to the international community than any others. While this should not lead us to fail to protest against these others, we should also recognize that it is not now possible to unite the international community on any other basis than that of a clear repudiation of white supremacism. [23]

Using his own arguments, Bull is not justified in claiming that other forms of racial discrimination are unjust. They might be by Western standards or according to other moral systems, but there is no consensus in this regard. Indeed, there is no guarantee that there will ever be a consensus on this issue. Thus, while Bull's approach to justice is politically practical, it does not yield a consistent morality.

To this point, I have concentrated on explaining the theoretical underpinnings of Bull's justice. Now it is necessary to explore Bull's understanding of what international justice must be if the international system is to survive.

The Third World Position

Bull's argument for justice hinges on the relationship of the discontented nations of the world to the international

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[23] Hedley Bull, "The West and South Africa", Daedalus, (v.3, #2, 1982), 266.

system. In the following discussion, I will present Bull's assessment of the principles of justice that he believes will have to be adopted by the international system if it is to survive. Bull feels that the developing world has made a number of demands of the developed world; how the developed world reacts to those demands will determine the fate of the system. In the discussion to follow, I present Bull's explanation of the five major demands of the developing world; his examination of the tensions between the First and the Third Worlds over these demands; and his prescription for how the First World should react. Of greatest importance, however, is the question of how plausible is Bull's assertion that the developing world has the ability to disrupt the international system if its wishes are not accommodated. I do not believe this to be a valid argument. At the least, the argument is difficult to prove; at the most, there are strong reasons to believe that the disaffected nations of the world lack the power and the unity needed to effect fundamental changes in the international system.

In Bull's assessment, the Third World is demanding proportionate or distributive justice. Distributive justice is the concept that rights and benefits should be distributed in accordance with need. He identifies five demands of justice:

1. A demand for the absolute sovereignty of states.
2. Respect for the principle of national self-determination.
3. Racial justice and equality.
4. A demand for economic justice, which has changed over the

years to incorporate the ideas of the New International Economic Order and demands for compensation for past exploitation.

5. A demand for cultural liberation. Many Third World states view as neo-colonialist the standards by which the West presumes to judge their conduct.[24]

Bull dates most of these demands from the end of the nineteenth century, and notes that, originally, all of these principles were derived from the expressed moral principles of the dominant Western states. Bull believes, however, that the Third World's demands for justice over the past 40 years may have departed from Western principles in fundamental ways. In the past, the educational experiences of national leaders and the political necessities of the day required that Third World demands be tailored to appeal to the moral and ideological sensibilities of the West. Today, the changing power relationships of the international system and the emergence of national leaders more representative of indigenous forces and thought has meant that there is now legitimate doubt as to how far Third World conceptions of justice are compatible with the ideals of the West. This divergence of views has, necessarily, increased the areas of conflict between the developed and developing worlds. The five demands listed above are the more prominent areas in which the Third World is unhappy with the developed world. These areas of contention illustrate the nature

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[24] Hedley Bull, Justice In International Relations (University of Waterloo, 1983-84 Hagey Lectures), pp. 2-5.

of the struggle that must be overcome in actually defining "justice".

Having identified the five demands of the developing world on the international system, Bull proceeds to analyze the tensions created by these demands between the developed and underdeveloped worlds. Even though the five demands all have their roots in Western thought and do not appear to be incompatible with basic principles of Western justice, the Western world does find fault with the application of some of its principles by the Third World.

The tendency of the Third World to regard national sovereignty as an absolute right contrasts with what Bull sees as a Western desire to limit such rights by asserting the existence of overriding obligations to the world community. In Bull's assessment, the Third World regards sovereignty as necessary in order to ensure that it can exercise maximum control over its destiny and avoid foreign domination. This desire, however, creates its own contradictions. For example, the Third World claim that it should have absolute control over its natural resources and economic activity implies that the Third World should have the right to deny the First World access to necessary resources. Such a position could conflict with other Third World principles, notably the concept of distributive justice, which should require that the Third World be as receptive to the needs of the First World as the reverse.

The developed and underdeveloped worlds appear to be heading

toward further disagreement on the question of national self-determination. According to Bull, "(t)he ultimate moral basis of the right of self-determination recognised in the West is the right of individual persons to determine themselves politically, through exercise of a right of democratic political choice."[25] This principled approach to self-determination is often not shared in the Third World, where "national liberation" often involves social and economic development on the basis of a socialist model, an approach which is "...anathema to much Western opinion..." and which often entails a concept of democracy and an understanding of the individual's relationship to society that is much different than in the West.[26] The willingness of many national liberation movements to utilize violence in their struggles and then demand international recognition and sanction for their actions is another tendency, Bull notes, with which the West has difficulty coming to terms, despite the West's own history of political violence.

On the sensitive subject of racial equality, the developed and underdeveloped worlds are largely in agreement on general principles. Disagreements arise in the area of moral consistency. As noted, when advocating racial equality, most of the countries of the Third World are quite content to ignore non-white discrimination against other non-whites, and focus, instead, on the discrimination of whites against non-whites.

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[25] Ibid., p.7.

[26] Ibid.

Bull sees this highly selective definition of racial discrimination as graphically demonstrating that justice, for most of the underdeveloped world, has more to do with escaping Western domination than with promoting some international code of conduct.

Bull does emphasize the relationship of the struggle for power to the demands for justice internationally. Much of the anger of the Third World is directed against the United States due to the fact that the U.S. is the dominant economic and political power in the world. Bull acknowledges that what is really going on is the eternal struggle of the poor to obtain what the rich have - at the same time freeing themselves of domination - against the determination of the rich to maintain the status quo. But whereas Hans Morgenthau would leave the argument at this point, Bull carries it a step farther.

While Bull certainly does not underplay the importance of power considerations when evaluating states' motives, he does not define state behavior, and the actions of statesmen, solely in these narrow terms. He continues to add the moral dimension to his assessment of international conduct, believing it to play a very significant role in the modern international system, and to possess the potential to be even more fundamental in the future. In Bull's view, Third World leaders really are demanding what they see as justice, and many of them are truly motivated by the morality of what they are advocating. Likewise, First World leaders are concerned with and swayed, to differing degrees, by

the moral ideals that they express. Once again, it is Bull's belief that moral concerns are a necessary part of human nature that differentiates him from the realists.

The most profound disagreements between the developing and developed world are probably in the realm of economic justice. Bull argues that the West recognizes a certain level of responsibility towards the Third World in this area, but it does not recognize any overriding moral obligation to act for the benefit of the developing world. Western nations believe that they have the right to decide if and how they will respond to Third World poverty. The West is also inclined towards helping individual citizens within Third World countries, or at least formulating policies on the basis of how those policies will benefit the common people of an impoverished state. By contrast, Third World leaders are most concerned with developing the power and influence of their country's government over the economy of the state. They are more concerned with the broader social context within which they function and have little concern with the individualist preoccupations of the West.

The moral arguments in favor of economic change also vary. In demanding a redistribution of economic wealth and power, the Third World emphasizes the right of compensation for past wrongs. It makes the argument that much Third World poverty is attributable to the devastating effect of colonialism on the economic and social structures of the colonized peoples. First World wealth is claimed to be largely the result of this same

exploitation, and the international economic order is seen as institutionalizing and promoting the forces that have made poverty a defining characteristic of the developing world.

The First World, on the other hand, concentrates on the present and future needs of the Third World "...together with the goals of harmony between developed and developing states in the international community..."[27] It vehemently rejects the argument that it bears moral responsibility for the situation of the Third World. It strongly disagrees with the Third World contention that the problems of most underdeveloped nations are caused by the exploitation by the wealthy of the poor, preferring to pin the blame on local problems, such as social attitudes, political instability, or government corruption. The First World also believes that its wealth is a direct result of its own technological advancement, and the strength of its political and social institutions. Whatever may have been extracted from the Third World certainly is not fundamental to the existence of First World prosperity. Even if the plight of the Third World could be proven to be attributable to past exploitation by the First World, there is some question as to how reasonable it is to hold the people of today responsible for the wrongs of the past.

Having noted the significant differences that exist between the developed and underdeveloped states of the world on the questions of international justice, Bull proceeds to discuss the concept of justice that he believes could and should be embraced

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[27] Ibid., p.9.

by the international community as a whole. He bases his discussion on an assessment of what he believes to be possible, given his understanding of actual trends within international relations, and what kind of concepts must necessarily be considered and developed when formulating the principles of international justice.

First, Bull believes that the rights due to sovereign states must be limited by obligations to the international community. The rights of states and peoples are, he argues, ultimately derived from the rules of the international community, and are legitimated by the existence and functioning of this community. The idea of absolute sovereignty of states must be rejected, in principle at least, because of the reality of the interdependence of different nations and political groupings, a reality which requires cooperation and the recognition of international imperatives.

Bull goes on to argue that the rights and benefits of justice must be extended in the international sphere to individuals the world over, not just to nations and states. He supports his position by arguing that changes in perception make this understanding of justice in the international context more plausible. He cites the Nuremberg and Tokyo war crimes trials as events which added considerable weight to the creation and promotion of international law and a sense of international obligation regarding respect for individuals. Bull is well aware of the fact that governments actually make little attempt to

further individual rights in their conduct of foreign policy, but he believes that the existence of a sense of international welfare is a spark that can be nurtured and made to grow.

Third, Bull feels that justice must take account and advantage of the emerging sense of a world common good, defined as what is in the interests of humanity as a whole - for example, ecological concerns. This "...world common good...is the common interest not of states, but of the human species in maintaining itself".[28] The world common good takes precedence not only over state interests, but even the interests of individuals. When individual rights come into conflict with this "world commmon good", then those rights must be limited, just as they would be within a state.

What Bull calls the "world common good" is, of course, the cosmopolitan justice of The Anarchical Society; the characteristics are the same. What has changed is the credibility that Bull now appears to grant the concept. Bull knows that to recognize the existence of a world common good is not to ensure that it will be promoted or protected. The lack of consensus on how to deal with international problems and, were such a consensus possible, the lack of institutions capable of implementing policies are two obvious problems that would have to be overcome before the concept of a world common good could be made to have practical effect.

Bull feels that a "new prominence" must be given questions

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[28] Ibid., p.14.

of distributive justice in international relations. In the past, the discussion of international justice has centred around reciprocal justice, i.e., the mutual recognition of rights and duties between states. Today, however, all segments of international society are concerned with some aspect of distributive justice when defining their relationship with the rest of the world. Influenced by the spread of egalitarian values and sporting an awareness of international economic inequalities, the Third World is demanding a more just distribution of resources. For its part, the First World is concerned with its access to Third World resources and is aware of the possible threat to its accustomed lifestyle posed by demands from, and developments in, the Third World. The same kind of tensions are apparent within the Socialist bloc, where disputes over the distribution of resources are pandemic.

Bull notes a number of difficulties associated with the use of distributive justice in international relations. Once again, the absence of a world government or institutions to actually distribute resources and benefits creates immense practical difficulties. Thus, realistically, distributive justice would have to be dispensed by states, which are hardly disinterested parties and which possess only a very rudimentary sense of international community. From a philosophical perspective, most studies of distributive justice have focused on the concept from within the context of states, though this may be changing; theorists such as Charles Beitz are now examining distributive

justice from the perspective of individuals.

How should the West respond to the demands of the Third World? The West must understand that the underdeveloped world is attempting to divest itself of the domination of the Western world. The West must also accept that, as Third World aspirations are fulfilled, First World power and influence will be correspondingly reduced. Indeed, the developed world will be placed in the uncomfortable and unfamiliar position of being vulnerable to the decisions and actions of others outside of the European-North American power bloc.

However, Bull does believe that Western nations do have rights and interests of their own that they can legitimately protect. These include such things as the right to resist aggression, or to insist on setting human rights standards when dealing with members of the Third World. Bull also believes that there are some issues and principles, such as freedom of information, which should never be compromised, even at the cost of accommodation.

Bull does not attempt to defend his choice of values, nor does he offer any philosophical justifications for the ideals of the West as opposed to the ideals of other societies. In many ways, however, Bull's approach to the role of Western values in the building of international justice really needs no defence. Whatever Bull's personal preferences, it is clear that the approach to international justice that he adopts requires that Western values be included in the final mix. The real question

is whether or not, in the end, international justice can reconcile the contradictory fundamental values of different cultures. This is a question that will be considered in depth in the next chapter.

Thus, Bull sees the Third World as having placed certain demands on the international system which must be accommodated insofar as doing so is possible. He notes how the developed and developing world conflict over these demands and has offered his prescription of what course the First World should follow in dealing with the Third World. A number of basic questions remain to be answered, however, foremost among these "how plausible is Bull's argument for the necessity of justice?"

Analyzing the Third World Threat

There are three central problems with Bull's contention that there is a need for justice in the state system. First, Bull must demonstrate that the developing nations of the world actually constitute a credible threat to the international system. Second, he must prove that if these nations do constitute such a potential threat, they would be willing to act together cooperatively in order to exercise whatever potential power they might possess. Third, he must show that the kind of consensual international justice that he believes to be necessary is actually a plausible goal for the international community, not just an exercise in wishful thinking. It is not clear that he proves any of these points but, for the remainder of this chapter, I shall only examine the supposed threat posed by the

developing world to the international system. The likelihood of Bull's prescriptions for international justice becoming a reality is a question that will be considered within the context of the international society, in Chapter Four.

If the potential influence of the developing world could be demonstrated to be as profound as Bull implies, then his argument could be supported by the realist principle of self-interest: it would be in the self-interest of the developed world to meet Third World demands. It is not clear that the Third World really possesses this potential, however.

There is little question that considerable economic and political change is causing shifts in the distribution of power in the world. The developing world is not necessarily benefitting from such changes since many shifts of power are occurring within the First World. Nonetheless, the developing world is definitely making its voice heard in the international arena, something that it was never able to do before. According to Bull, a combination of factors has made it possible for the devloping world to be moderately successful in its attempts at asserting its independence and increasing its power.

Bull feels that the overall effect of struggle within the Third World has been to force a change in the power distribution and structure of the world system. The underdeveloped world is now far more integrated into the international economy and political system than ever before. Many of the Third World objectives in the pursuit of international justice have been

accepted by all of the world, at least at a moral level. Though much remains to be accomplished, the recognition of sovereignty, the independence of colonies, and significant changes in attitudes about race have characterized the world system in recent years. It seems quite plausible to argue, as Bull does, that this increasing involvement by the developing world in the international system cannot help but be translated into some kind of power. Exactly what kind of power, and how great it would be still remains to be determined.

It should be noted that the changes in the international system which Bull believes indicate significant shifts in attitude have actually cost the West very little ideologically and are in keeping with Western morality. Indeed, as has been pointed out, the five demands of the Third World are based on Western principles and practices; they really involve the proper application of Western morality. The kind of changes now being demanded, however, are economic and political in nature, and it is far less clear that they are in keeping with Western ideals. This fact is not necessarily an argument against further transformation, but it does mean that the changes demanded of the future may be even more difficult to accomplish than those of the past.

Over the past forty years, Bull reports, most of the countries of the Third World have experienced sustained economic growth and some are on the verge of controlling their population growth. The political/economic power of Third World oil-producing

nations and the emergence of newly-industrializing countries (NICs) are further indications that it is no longer feasible to divide the world into two camps, the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak. The situation has become more complex.

Militarily and economically, Bull argues, the Third World is now producing its own superpowers. Countries like China and India are developing their own spheres of influence and are not subject to the whims of the international superpowers. Many other countries are developing or purchasing the technology and skills needed to take better advantage of their natural resources and to construct modern industrial bases.

Even as the Third World has advanced, the Western world has declined in its ability to control international events. Whereas in the past, Western nations acted as a monolithic bloc in their dealings with the non-Western world, the Western states of today are more inclined towards pursuing their individual interests, making it much more difficult to maintain a Western monopoly of power. They are not overly concerned with maintaining some kind of political/economic solidarity, at least regarding their relations with the Third World. In addition, Bull writes, the rise of the Soviet Bloc contributed to the erosion of Western influence, as a natural alliance of the weaker factions against the stronger has arisen. These developments presented the Third World with many different diplomatic options and further increased its independence from, and influence on, the developed world. Recent changes in the Soviet bloc may have altered this

situation, but the basic argument still holds.

Bull presents all of the changes noted above as proof of the changing power structure in the modern world. The result of this shift of economic and political power, he argues, has been a more general state of equilibrium around the world, and a more equitable distribution of power. This is not to say that massive disparities in wealth will soon be eliminated, but control of the world's resources is no longer as concentrated as it once was. Moreover, the developing world has won a further victory by its success in having so many of its demands be accepted as reasonable in the developed world.

It is clear that the distribution of economic, political, and military power in the world is being more evenly distributed between the First and the Third Worlds. But, in reality, this is to say very little. There are still tremendous disparities between the developed and underdeveloped worlds. Recognizing the reality of a shift in world power is one thing; claiming that this shift leaves the developing world in a position of strength in relation to the developed world is something else entirely.

Stephen Krasner's assessment of the international system leaves little room for Third World power. Krasner notes "...that national political regimes in almost all Third World countries are profoundly weak both internationally and domestically."[29] He goes on to write:

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[29] Stephen Krasner, Structural Conflict, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p.3.

> Political weakness and vulnerability are fundamental sources of Third World behavior...the national power capabilities of most Third World states are extremely limited.The national economic and military resources at the disposal of their leaders are unlikely to alter the behavior of Northern actors or the nature of international regimes. Southern states are subject to external pressures that they cannot influence through unilateral action. The international weakness of almost all less developed countries (LDCs) is compounded by the internal underdevelopment of their political and social systems...They are exposed to vacillations of an international system from which they cannot extricate themselves but over which they have only limited control. The gap between Northern and Southern capabilities is already so great that even if the countries of the South grew very quickly and those of the North stagnated (an unlikely pair of assumptions in any event), only a handful of developing countries would significantly close the power gap within the next one hundred years.[30]

Krasner allows only a few exceptions to this generalization, notably China and India, which are large enough to insulate themselves from the operation of the international system, and some of the economically-powerful states of Southeast Asia.

Thus, whatever the changing international power structure, the developed world is still, unquestionably, in a position of international dominance. What remains to be determined is whether or not the developing world can exert any meaningful influence on the international system, let alone the kind of decisive influence that Bull wants to ascribe to it. Within the framework of Bull's argument, the most basic question to be considered is whether or not the Third World is capable of acting as a monolithic bloc, as it would have to be able to in order to pose a collective threat to the international system.

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[30] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

The realist vision of the international system is that of a structure that is set and governed by the realities of power and self-interest. Cooperative behavior is only possible if it can be seen to serve the interests of the state. As noted in the previous chapter, those interests can be very broadly defined. The First World possesses the resources necessary to provide it with power. On the basis of that power, the First World is in the position to set the rules and fix the parameters within which international interaction takes place. This is a simplified assessment of the international system, but it does illustrate the general principle that the existing system largely reflects the interests of the powerful. On the other hand, weak states, by definition, are extremely limited in their ability to influence the international system. They are forced to conform to international norms and institutions which they must accept if they are to function within the potentially beneficial world order. Admittedly, in recent years the developing world has become increasingly prominent within international organizations. But it must be noted that the actual efficacy of these institutions has varied depending on how useful they have been to the interests of the developed world. The international system continues to reflect the concerns of the powerful.

Bull rejects this analysis, but it is not clear how. Bull's argument supporting the contention that the Third World may disrupt the international system requires that the nations of the developing world possess the ability to work together. Bull's

argument is based on the premise that the deprived nations of the Third World will come to perceive the international system as being incapable of meeting their needs. It is unclear, however, that the international system is so detrimental to the interests of the developing world as a whole that a significant number of these states would be willing to make the sacrifices necessary to topple the system. There are many advantages to be found within the modern state system, even for many poor states. More important, most poor states, as argued above, have little choice but to play the game and participate in the system on the basis of the rules defined by those powers which dominate the system. Poor nations obviously lack the resources necessary for them to break with the establishment. National development is largely dependent on outside forces, which means that developing states must conform to the accepted international standards. Any honest attempt to break away from the established order could only invite domestic hardship and political instability. The only members of the international community who could perceive their interests as lying in a disruption of the established system are those states which have nothing to lose and nothing to gain by being part of the order. It would appear, however, that such states, if they exist at all, are few in number and would, logically, have little effect on any other international actor and even less effect on the integrity of the system as a whole-unless, of course, these deprived states resorted to some kind of international terrorism, a possibility that cannot be dismissed,

but which is outside the immediate scope of this discussion.

Stanley Hoffman expresses his understanding of the relationship between the developing and developed world in the following terms:

> ...long-term mutual interests exist primarily with the wealthiest of the poor nations, because they are the ones with whom we deal most. It is the least needy with whom we have the most mutual interests. The neediest either we do not need, or else - in those cases where we do need their raw materials - they are too weak either to absorb enough of our exports or of our surplus investment capacity, or to be much of a bother.[31]

In order to have any effect on the international system, the entire Third World, the relatively powerful as well as the weak, would have to unite in opposition to the established system. This is not likely to happen, however. As Hoffman points out, it is the most powerful of the needy states that share the most interests with the developed world. Powerful emerging states acquire a stake in the existing order. They might attempt to modify the system to better reflect their own interests, but they would have little to gain and much to lose in destabilizing the international order. Thus, the prospects of Third World cooperative behavior seem to be very small, despite Bull's apparent expectation of such behavior.

If it could be demonstrated that the emerging nations of the Third World are somehow being denied their proper places in positions of power in the international system, then it could be

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[31] Stanley Hoffman, Duties Beyond Borders, (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1981) pp.161-162.

argued that they would have a sufficient motive for sabatoging the operation of the system. This kind of argument is based on the assumption, however, that the community of power is a private club with strict membership requirements and that it is within the capacity of established powers to deny access to new powers. This element of choice on the part of the established powers, however, is far more limited than this kind of assumption would require, especially in the modern world. While it is conceivable that the established powers would try to prevent the emergence of rival powers, it is unclear how they would do this in a contemporary world where the legitimate use of military force has been attentuated. Moreover, there is little to indicate that established powers will always act to prevent the emergence of rivals. The shift of power within the industrial world since the end of World War II has occurred without the use of violence or the risk of instability. Admittedly, the ideological and political polarization of the last 45 years may have created conditions uniquely suited to a peaceful exchange of power within the Western bloc; certainly, in the past, Western states have been only too willing to dispute one another's national aspirations. Nonetheless, in the contemporary world, it seems fair to say that as Third World states acquire power within the international system they automatically gain a more prominent position within the system. The reality of power makes it impossible to exclude or ignore those states which can meet the criteria set by the international order. Western nations might,

theoretically, attempt to maintain their dominance over the international system, but the reality of a powerful non-Western state cannot be ignored and must be accommodated. China and India stand as examples of this. The very process by which such states have emerged proves that they are adept at interacting within the established system and, like their Western counterparts, that they have acquired a vested interest in the world order.

The only way that the powerful states of the Third World would, at considerable risk to themselves, consent to champion the cause of the entire Third World, would be if their own self-interest dictated that they do so. It is possible to imagine a scenario wherein this would be the case, but it would require an international state of affairs very different from what presently exists or is likely to exist for the forseeable future. Nonetheless, the argument that the developing world could be unified through the requirements of self-interest should be examined.

The Western world has developed an international system which is centred around an ideology of liberal economic and political process. The laws, conventions, and practices which the Western world has incorporated intc the existing international system over the past two hundred years reflect this ideological bias. It is Bull's contention that the Third World is in the process of rejecting many of these established rules, and is attempting to force its own vision of the rules that should govern international interaction onto the existing

structures. The Third World shares certain ideological principles which cause it to define its interests very differently from those of Western nations. As an example, the Third World focus on distributive justice creates a demand for economic justice, which is understood to encompass some redistribution of wealth. Every Third World nation, rich or poor, powerful or weak, would benefit from an international system that would sanction such a redefinition of the rules governing economic and political relations. Western nations, on the other hand, find the existing system to be very much to their liking, and are inclined to resist change. This is the kind of situation which leads to tension and conflict, but it is also a situation that is easily described by realist principles.

The assumption that emerging nations will acquire a vested interest in the existing system would only be valid if those nations also acquired the same interests as the Western states. It is quite clear that this is not the case, however, and cannot be the case. Problems of overpopulation, underproduction, lack of natural resources, and the myriad difficulties caused or exacerbated by the unequal relationship between the First and Third Worlds all serve to shape the national interests of the developing world. As Bull goes to pains to stress, Third World nations have defined their own interests and are now seeking to advance those interests. The fact that some of these nations have managed to function successfully within the established order does not preclude the very real possibility that these same

nations have come to the conclusion that they can be even more successful within a changed system. As Bull points out, many Third World states have acquired various degrees of power on the international scale, but still are firmly mired in the milieu of the Third World. An example of this is India, a democratic nation of considerable economic and military power which, nevertheless, must contend with all of the problems endemic in the Third World. India is the kind of powerful, emerging nation which would benefit from a concept of international justice which would include economic redistribution and an acceptance of the measures that many countries feel are necessary to control political discourse.

In the end, regardless of how successful some Third World states might be within the international system, they perceive the established order as being inherently opposed to the kind of measures and international structures that they believe are necessary to further Third World interests and overcome the unjust and ever-growing disparities between the developed and underdeveloped worlds. As long as this perception reflects reality, it will be in the interests of all Third World states, the powerful as well as the weak, to press for changes in the international system that will accommodate Third World conceptions of a just world order. As Third World states acquire more power, they will become far more successful in forcing the changes they desire.

There is quite a difference between recognizing and

supporting measures that would be beneficial to one's national interest, however, and disrupting the international system for the sake of those ends. It would only be under extremely desperate circumstances that the powerful nations of the underdeveloped world would find this approach to be in their national interest. For them, patience is the best option. If Bull is correct, these nations will soon be positions of much greater power. Under present conditions, the argument returns to the points discussed earlier: powerful Third World states benefit from the existing system too much to contemplate destroying it. Weaker states would have fewer qualms in this regard, but lack the power to be a threat.

Conclusion

Bull's argument for justice is dependent on the assertion that the power of the developing world is inevitably increasing; it is in the best interest of the West to seek accommodation with the developing world now, while Western influence is great enough to secure favorable terms. The alternative is to risk the collapse of the international system and, presumably, its reconstruction along less Western principles. As I have pointed out, this is a highly contentious assertion. It is very difficult to prove, in a world of increasing international economic disparity, that the industrialized world is in a state of decline and that the poor nations of the modern world are somehow poised to step up and take its place. If this unlikely possibility is permitted, however, Bull's argument does acquire greater

plausibility.

It can be argued against Bull that the emerging nations of the Third World emerge because of their ability to play according to the rules laid out by the established powers. Once they acquire power themselves, they also acquire the values and behaviours of the states running the system. Against this argument, it is pointed out that the Third World is distinct from the First World in its values and experiences. These differences may well necessitate a different interpretation of state interests which, as the developing world becomes more powerful, might lead to a radical transformation of the international system, a transformation not necessarily to the liking of the West but to the benefit of the developing world as a whole.

What is theoretically possible, of course, must always be weighed against what is practically possible, and the apparent weakness of the developing world certainly undermines any attempt to build an argument premised on Third World power. It is undeniably the case that some states in the developing world possess considerable influence within the international system, and it is conceivable that the distribution of power in the world may come to favour the Third World. There is little evidence that this is occurring at this time, but even if it were, it would not follow that the rise of the Third World need be accompanied by the decline of the developed nations. The many strengths of the Western World will not simply evaporate overnight. Any new world system, including one dominated by the

Third World, would have to seek accommodation with the West, even as the reverse is true. If the Third World is indeed on the rise, as Bull believes it to be, it seems just as likely that the development of a new concept of international justice would be part of a natural evolutionary process within international society as the product of forced conciliation. International justice, deemed to be so necessary to international society by Bull, may be the end result of a natural process of compromise between competing moralities - if such is possible.

In the end, this becomes the central question: if the world ever found itself in the position of needing to reach a moral consensus on the content of "justice", would it be possible to achieve? Can the competing moralities of the world's nations be combined into a fundamental whole? These are the questions to be considered in the next chapter. Hedley Bull's concept of justice cannot be divorced from his concept of international society; justice is an integral part of that society.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

Introduction

Hedley Bull concluded his critique of E.H. Carr's The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939 by writing:

> Concepts such as the balance of power, the concert of the great powers, the comity of nations, international law, the diplomatic system, cosmopolitan civilization, and the common interests of mankind are either left out of account, or treated simply as instruments of the special purposes of some state or group of states. The idea of an international society - of common interests and common values perceived in common by modern states, and of rules and institutions deriving from them - is scarcely recognized in The Twenty Years' Crisis. In the course of demonstrating how appeals to an overriding international society subserve the special interests of the ruling group of powers, Carr jettisons the idea of international society itself. This is the idea with which a new analysis of the problem of international relations should now begin. [1]

It is precisely with a consideration of international society and its influence on the conduct of international relations that Bull begins his own analysis of international relations. His concerns about the survival of international society are what underlie his preoccupation with the influence of the developing world on contemporary international politics. Unfortunately, the solutions that he offers to the problems of international society are seriously deficient and cannot be shown to be plausible alternatives to the existing international reality.

I begin this chapter by examining Bull's understanding of international society, and his defence of his definition of the

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[1] Hedley Bull, "The Twenty Years' Crisis Thirty Years On", International Journal, (1969), 638.

concept. In keeping with his general approach to international relations theory, Bull essentially argues that international society is a complex entity possessing Grotian, Hobbesian, and Kantian elements. It cannot be reduced to any simple formula, but, contrary to what others might claim, it does definitely exist, and possesses characteristics that can be built upon to the benefit of international justice. I then examine Bull's contention that international society is, in fact, expanding. This argument can be used to support Bull's claims for the possibility of moral justice in the international system, but the disaffection of the Third World with the international system, discussed in chapter three, is a factor that must be recognized.

The fact that international society may be expanding does not change Bull's conviction that this society must be able to incorporate some of the values of the developing world if it is to survive. The final part of the chapter examines the plausibility of this prescription by discussing the forces at work in the international system that mitigate for and against the creation of international justice. Bull argues convincingly that the survival of the state system is, for the forseeable future, assured. But, I contend, the same desires to preserve moral, cultural, and political differences that make the state system inevitable also act to prevent the formation of a common international morality to form the basis of international justice. Thus, my final conclusion is that international justice, while a theoretical possibility, is highly improbable

given Bull's own analysis of the existing international system.

Hedley Bull and the International Society

Bull begins his discussion of "international society" by describing the forces and actors that make the modern international society a reality. The first of these actors are states, understood to be

> ...independent political communities, each of which possesses a government and asserts sovereignty in relation to a particular portion of the earth's surface and a particular segment of the human population.[2]

These political communities must be able to exercise real control over their people and territory in order to truly be states.

A "system of states" exists whenever

> ...states are in regular contact with one another, and where in addition there is interaction between them sufficient to make the behaviour of each a necessary element in the calculations of the other...[3]

Building on these concepts, Bull provides his definition of "international society":

> A society of states (or international society) exists when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions.[4]

Thus, states can exist without forming an international system, even as an international system can exist without forming

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[2] Hedley Bull, The Anarchical Society, (London: MacMillan, 1977), p.8.

[3] Ibid., p.10

[4] Ibid.,p.13.

an international society. It is the significant interaction between states that creates a system; it is the recognition of unifying commonalities that leads a system to become a society.

In order for a system to exist as a society, it is necessary for certain elementary goals to be attained. In Bull's analysis, international order is a condition that "...sustains those goals of the society of states that are elementary, primary, or universal."[5]

The first elementary goal is "...the ...preservation of the system and society of states itself".[6] Modern states, in Bull's estimation, act to ensure that the society in which they exist remains the dominant form of universal political organisation.

The second goal is that of "...maintaining the independence or external sovereignty of individual states."[7] This latter goal is deemed by international society to be subordinate to the first goal of preserving the society itself.

The third goal is that of peace. By this

> ...what is meant is the maintenance of peace in the sense of the absence of war among member states of international society as the normal condition of their relationship, to be breached only in special circumstances and according to principles that are generally accepted.[8]

The goal of peace is subordinate to the first two goals.

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[5] Ibid., p.16.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid., p.17.

[8] Ibid., p.18.

Finally, international society is necessarily concerned with achieving three objectives that Bull believes are

> ...common goals of all social life:limitation of violence resulting in death or bodily harm, the keeping of promises and the stabilisation of possession by rules of property.[9]

These objectives are manifested in international society in a number of ways. The first, limitation of violence, is apparent in states agreeing among themselves to monopolize the legitimate use of violence and to limit the circumstances under which violence can be used. The keeping of promises is displayed in international agreements, such as treaties. The third goal, stability of possession, is demonstrated not only by states respecting one another's property but, more fundamentally, by the mutual recognition of sovereignty on the part of states. As Bull points out, historically,"... sovereignty... (is) derived from the idea that certain territories and peoples were the property...of the ruler."[10] These objectives complement, and in some cases duplicate, the elementary goals particular to the society of states.

Bull believes international reality to be reflected in a combination of a number of theoretical and philosophical approaches to international relations. In regards to the concept of international society, however, he strongly favors the Grotian perspective. The Grotian tradition describes international

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[9] Ibid.,p.19.

[10] Ibid.

relations in terms of an international society. In this respect it distinguishes itself from the other two major traditions, the Hobbesian and the Kantian.

The Hobbesian tradition describes international relations as a realm of continual war; peace is only a lull in which to prepare for the next war and the only rules to be followed are those of prudence or expediency. The competing Kantian tradition views "...the essential nature of international politics..." to lie in the bonds that link individual human beings across cultures and nations.[11] All humans exist potentially, if not in reality, as members of the community of humankind. As such, all humans share common interests and must be made to recognize this fact. The establishment of a cosmopolitan society is the highest goal of morality; the imperatives of the state system are, by definition, meant to be overcome and can be ignored if they conflict with the higher cosmopolitan morality.

The Grotian tradition of international relations lies between the two extremes of the Hobbesian and Kantian perspectives. In contrast with the Hobbesians, Grotians believe that conflict between states is limited by common interests and institutions; in response to the Kantians, Grotians see states as being the dominant members of international society. Grotians see international activity as being a realm of conflicting and congruent interests between states; the international activity that "best typifies international activity as a whole" is trade

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[11] Ibid.,p. 25.

or "...economic and social intercourse between one country and another."[12]

> The Grotian prescription for international conduct is that all states, in their dealings with one another, are bound by the rules and institutions of the society they form. As against the view of the Hobbesians, states in the Grotian view are bound not only by rules of prudence or expediency but also by imperatives of morality and law. But, as against the view of the universalists, what these imperatives enjoin is not the overthrow of the system of states and its replacement by a universal community of mankind, but rather acceptance of the requirements of coexistence and co-operation in a society of states. [13]

According to Bull, the modern international system reflects all of the elements which distinguish the Hobbesian, Kantian, and Grotian traditions: the elements of war, transnational solidarity, and regulated intercourse between states. Depending on the historical, geographical, and political situation at a given time, any one of these elements may be dominant within the international system.[14] Thus, a review of the history of international relations will reveal periods when, in accordance with Hobbesian premises, the world was locked in a continuous pattern of wars. At other periods, the Kantian tradition is reflected in transnational influences of major significance. But throughout modern times, according to Bull, international society has existed.

> The element of international society has always been present in the modern international system because at

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., p.41.

> no stage can it be said that the conception of the common interests of states, of common rules accepted and common institutions worked by them, has ceased to exert an influence.[15]

This is true even in periods of intense warfare. The element of international society might not exist in its fullest sense between the combatants, but it continues to exert considerable influence in the relationship between allies. Even the warring parties respect certain international conventions more than has been the case in the past. Modern wars and military actions need to be justified to the international community. This fact is seen by Bull as indicating the existence of international society. The state which asserts that it had just cause to initiate military action "at least... acknowledg(es) that it owes other states an explanation of its conduct, in terms of rules that they accept."[16]

International society, Bull reiterates, is only one of the elements at work in international politics. The elements of war and transnational solidarity or conflict are always present as well, to different degrees, and must be accounted for in most international phenomena. Thus, international law, for example, must be understood not simply as an instrument binding states together, but also as a tool of state interests and of transnational forces. Similarly, efforts to maintain the balance of power must be seen not only as being actions to preserve the

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[15] Ibid., p.42.

[16] Ibid.,p.45.

system, but also as attempts by different powers to gain ascendancy within that system.

Understanding the way in which the various characteristics of international society affect the possibilities of future international social development is fundamental to the following discussion. It is necessary to determine how far the international system can go toward adopting a pattern of behavior based on a common, moral understanding of justice. Bull discusses the expansion of international society - i.e., the near-universal adoption of common institutions and international principles - as being indicative of a larger cosmopolitan society. It soon becomes apparent, however, that there are serious deficiencies in Bull's claims for the expanding international system. The international society may indeed be more widespread today than at any time in the past, but this is not an indication of that society's binding strength, as shall be seen. It is highly questionable that the conditions necessary for the establishment of an international order based on consensual justice are actually being created.

The International Society: Expansion Or Contraction?

Bull believes that international society is expanding. He bases this conclusion on the fact that the important international institutions and principles that had been developed under the auspices of the European state system are being widely accepted, promoted, and defended by the emerging states of the developing world. Implicit in Bull's argument is the notion that

the acceptance of the principles of international society are based on more than just self-interest, but also involve a deeper moral commitment to, and belief in, the existing system on the part of the developing world. Nonetheless, Bull's insistence on the need for justice in international politics, discussed in chapter three, is predicated on the conviction that the developing world is on the verge of renouncing the existing system because the system cannot serve its needs. These conflicting views are reconciled by Bull's implicit assertion that the international society has expanded to a threshold point, beyond which it must either accommodate the Third World, or risk collapse.

Hedley Bull sees the modern international society as being a direct extension of the European international society. Over the period of the past four centuries, the European states extended their power over the entire world, eventually rising to a position where their international society, once one of many competing international societies, became dominant. That society now encompasses, and is accepted by, the developing and developed worlds. Nonetheless, since its inclusion in the system, the developing world has used its greater numbers to set about changing the international order, insofar as it can, to reflect its own interests.

Despite this progress on the part of the developing world, however, Bull does believe that the modern international system possesses significant divisive elements.

Bull acknowledges that

> (i)t is possible to argue that the emergence of a universal or inclusive system of states, and the collapse of European dominance in the present century, have contributed to a grave weakening of the structure of international society.[17]

Despite the growth of international institutions and organization since World War II, Bull notes the much lesser sense of common interest by states in the rules and institutions of the system. Many so-called modern states are not states at all, in Bull's estimation, but are pseudo-states whose existence in the system "...makes for a weakening of cohesion."[18] Much of the world is now in a state of conflict. Sometimes the struggle against colonialism has set in motion forces that perpetuate violence; in other cases, ideological and ethnic disagreements have highlighted the inability of some developing world states to coexist. The demands of the Third World for international change have often elicited a negative response from the First World, creating a polarization of positions and reducing areas of possible consensus. The cultural heterogeneity of international society makes consensus about rules and institutions much more difficult than in the past. The reassertion of cultural independence and the growth of indigenous ideologies to challenge the influence of Western culture and intellectual tradition in the Third World further exacerbate the differences in

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[17] Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, "Conclusion", The Expansion of International Society, ed. Hedley Bull and Adam Watson,(Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1985), pp.429-430.

[18] Ibid., p.430.

international society.

Despite these many divisions, however, Bull does not believe that the international society is in "a state of disintegration".[19] He points out that many of the problems facing the modern international system have existed in the past. "(I)t is important not to exaggerate the degree of cohesion that existed in the old, European-dominated system..." he writes; the old European system succeeded in producing two World Wars through its own machinations.[20] Much of the anarchy to be found in the modern international society cannot be attributed to the emerging world. Ideological, technological, economic, social and military factors would exert a disruptive influence on international society with or without the presence of the Third World.

The major reason that Bull believes in the continued preservation of international society, however, is that the states of the developing world have come to accept most of the major principles on which the European international society was based. Writes Bull:

> ...the most striking feature of the global international society of today is the extent to which the states of Asia and Africa have embraced such basic elements of European international society as the sovereign state, the rules of international law, the procedures and conventions of diplomacy and international organization. In all these areas they have sought to reshape existing rules and institutions, to eliminate discrimination against themselves and to assert their own interests forcefully, but all this has been against the background of the strong interests

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[19] Ibid., p.433.

[20] Ibid.

> they have perceived in accepting the rules and institutions, not only because of their need to make use of them in their relations with the erstwhile dominant powers, but also because they cannot do without them in their relations with one another.[21]

Bull concludes his defense of the position that international society is expanding by arguing that the multicultural nature of that society does not preclude its continued and efficient functioning. The perception of common interests, he asserts, will be sufficient to lead to cooperation between different cultures, as it has in the past. He also notes that all cultures change and that most modern cultures are currently undergoing considerable change. This statement may be an allusion on the part of Bull to the idea that greater cultural congruity in the future is not impossible. Finally, he asserts that "a cosmopolitan culture of modernity" does exist, to which the "leading elements of all contemporary societies belong, even if the masses of the people often do not".[22] What Bull forgets is that the "leading elements" of many Third World societies are often divided from their countrymen by wealth and exploitative practices.[23] The very culture of modernity that Bull advocates often comes to symbolize, as well as contribute to, this gulf. These facts make the propogation of this culture far more

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[21] Ibid., pp. 433-434.

[22] Ibid., p. 435.

[23] For an illustration of this point see: Michael P. Todaro, "Who Gets How Much of What? A Simple Illustration", Poverty Amidst Plenty, ed. Edward Weisband, (Boulder, Westview Press, 1989), pp. 51-53.

difficult.

One difficulty that Bull has is in demonstrating that the developing world is truly interested in a moral concept of justice, and is not simply concerned with advancing its own power. Implicit in Bull's argument is that accepting the principles of the European system entails developing an attachment to the system that is rooted in more than just self-interest. This belief is based, in part, on Bull's belief that humans require adherence to a morality beyond self-interest. There is no way to prove decisively that the Third World has developed such a commitment to the system, however. All of the examples that Bull provides to support his case - the Third World acceptance of "such basic elements of European international society as the sovereign state, the rules of international law, the procedures and conventions of diplomacy and international organization" - can be interpreted as being accepted because they are in the best interests of the Third World.[24] Similarly, the aspects of the system with which the Third World disagrees are, not surprisingly, those which are detrimental to the developing world's interests.

If the Third World commitment to the international system is dictated by no more than a concern for power within that system, then there are profound implications for international justice, which requires a moral connection to the system on the part of states. While Bull cannot prove that his reading of the Third

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[24] Bull and Watson, "Conclusion", p.433.

World's assessment of the international system is correct, he can present a strong argument for the position that Third World demands for justice should be considered as demands for justice.

Hans Morgenthau, of course, would say that the Third World is only interested in the pursuit of power. Stephen Krasner says that Third World states are "like all states in the international system" in being "concerned about vulnerability and threat."[25] Bull recognizes the Third World desire for justice as being focused on an attempt to escape Western domination; this requires power. At the same time, however, he is saying that the Third World is also making a moral claim in which it strongly believes.

Does this distinction really matter? Whether Third World leaders sincerely believe in the justice of their cause or not, they are still seeking power. Nonetheless, the moral element could mean that adherence to a system of justice will, in some way, mitigate or control the actions taken on behalf of power.

Bull's approach to this question of Third World demands is based on his observations of the international system and its leaders' behaviours. As the discussion of ideology and morality in chapter two made clear, it can be demonstrated that factors other than the cool calculation of power interests play a highly significant role in the conduct of international relations. Nonetheless, the larger question of what kinds of forces create particular ideologies and moralities remains unanswered. Bull

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[25] Stephen Krasner, Structural Conflict, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985), p.3.

accepts, with qualifications, E.H. Carr's argument that these concepts are reflections of the interests of power.[26] By accepting Carr's depiction of morality, Bull is accepting his contention that morality is used in the pursuit of power as a justification for this pursuit. Thus, it is no defense to say that justice is the seeking of moral ends because those moral ends serve the interests of power. The fact that, in Bull's view, the leaders of the Third World sincerely believe in the morality of their own cause does not change the reality that the fulfilment of their cause will ultimately further their states' power. But is this fact evidence that a state's morality and conception of justice are morally invalid? Bull argues that it is not.

In his analysis of E.H. Carr's The Twenty Years' Crisis, Bull accuses Carr of being prevented by his "relativist and instrumentalist conception of morals" from finding an effective "moral spring for action" in international politics.[27] In the period between the two World Wars, Carr points out that the principles used by Britain and France to justify their opposition to German re-emergence actually reflected their special interests and circumstances. From this starting point, he asserts that there is no moral basis for preferring one set of powers over another; all are simply motivated by their concern for national

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[26] Hedley Bull, "The Twenty Years'Crisis Thirty Years On", International Journal, (1969), 625-638.

[27] Ibid., 628.

dominance. As Bull points out, however, it is possible to accept this realist interpretation of events while recognizing that the British-French hegemony of the time was morally-preferable to that of Germany.

> Britain and France had a special interest in the maintenance of peace, but this did not mean that the doctrine of an identity of interest as between the dominant group and the world as a whole was without any foundation.[28]

Bull argues that objective factors made the moral-superiority of British-French or American domination clear, but Carr was prevented from making such a moral argument "by a relativism that denied all independent validity to moral argument" and an instrumentalism that saw all international institutions and practices as tools of the powerful.[29] Bull rejects this approach.

> The fact that all moral beliefs are socially or historically conditioned does not mean that they have no independent causal force, nor should it be taken to imply that moral disagreements cannot be settled by rational discussion. The fact that moral principles may serve as the instrument of a dominant group within a society does not mean that they cannot also function so as to fulfil purposes recognized by the society as a whole. Certainly it is not possible to treat the whole normative structure of international law and international morality in this crypto-Marxist fashion. A principle like pacta sunt servanda will be upheld by particular powers (and rejected by others) at particular times for their own special reasons, but it derives not from the interests of the ruling group, but from the perceived interests of all states in securing the elementary conditions of social co-existence.[30]

Thus, the question of the developing world's definition of

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[28] Ibid., 629.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.,630.

morality in relation to its own interests can be seen to have a mixed answer. As the above passage indicates, Bull allows for morality defined by the interests of power. What Bull rejects is the notion that international rules are nothing more than the tools of the powerful. Rules can serve the interests of all, depending on the circumstances. The efficacy of particular rules, of course, is more susceptible to power considerations.

The major point to be made, however, is that the fact that the morality of the developing world reflects its interests does not preclude the possibility that the demands of the Third World are morally legitimate in themselves. This point is reinforced when one considers that, from a Western perspective, the demands of the developing world are just, or at least are not antithetical to significant components of Western thought. Thus, considered without reference to power, these demands can be argued to be moral in themselves from Western and non-Western perspectives.

This discussion has helped to clarify another point. Bull's rejection of moral relativism indicates that his own approach to the pursuit of international justice is rooted in some conception of universal justice. As noted in chapter three, it is unclear what role this universal justice plays, and it certainly is not clear what form it takes, but it does exist. That Bull barely addresses this concept is a major deficiency in his work, but it does not take away from his ability to point international relations inquiry in a general direction.

The fact that the Third World may have a deeper moral commitment to the international system, however, does not prove that the system is capable of supporting international justice. For one thing, the depth of the developing world's commitment to the system can still be questioned. It does seem logical to assume that the developing world would be ambivalent about a system that it does not find to be totally satisfactory. At the least, it would be less committed to such a system than those nations which enjoy greater benefits from the system. If the Third World came to perceive its overall interests as lying elsewhere, then it could abandon its support of the European state system principles. It could come to be a disruptive and divisive influence rather than simply another part of the global whole.

It is precisely this fear of the Third World abandoning the existing international system that underlies Bull's concern with justice in the international system. For the reasons discussed in chapter three, I do not believe that the effects of Third World disaffection is a legitimate fear. Nonetheless, if Bull's premises are accepted for now, it becomes clear that the existing international order is more fragile than it at first appears.

Bull has established the existence of international society, an entity with its own widely-accepted rules and institutions. What he has described, however, seems held together by bonds that are too tenuous to be the foundation of the moral consensus necessary for the creation of international justice. It is Bull's

discussion of the state system, however, that raises the greatest questions about the possibility that the existing international society is capable of sustaining international justice.

The State System

Hedley Bull's assessment of the state system serves to underline the significant difficulties inherent in the construction of a true international justice. The state system, Bull argues, is here to stay for the forseeable future. Its institutions are expanding, its power is increasing, the international solidarity that does exist in the contemporary world is found in the international society of states. Most important, Bull emphasizes, is the fact that the popularity of the state is, if anything, increasing; different national groups are constantly agitating for their own states. This popularity Bull believes, is largely explainable by the ability that a state affords to peoples and governments to preserve themselves from unwanted foreign influences.[31] This last point, I argue, is fundamental to the discussion, but is not fully developed by Bull. If the preservation of national and ideological differences is a major force behind the perpetuation of the state system, then the development of a moral consensus that can lead to international justice does not appear to be a very strong possibility.

Bull believes that international society can survive only if

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[31] Hedley Bull, "The State's Positive Role In World Affairs", Daedalus, (v. 108, 1979).

it is capable of making necessary changes:

> The future of international society is likely to be determined, among other things, by the preservation and extension of a cosmopolitan culture, embracing both common ideas and common values, and rooted in societies in general as well as in their elites, that can provide the world international society of today with the kind of underpinning enjoyed by the geographically smaller and culturally more homogeneous international societies of the past...Like the world international society, the cosmopolitan culture on which it depends may need to absorb non-Western elements to a much greater degree if it is to be genuinely universal and provide a foundation for a universal international society.[32]

This quotation has a number of implications which will form the basis of much of the discussion to follow. First, even though the word "justice" is never mentioned in the passage, the conditions to be created by the cosmopolitan culture that Bull is supporting are the same as those needed for the creation of international justice. Second, Bull is advocating a widespread cosmopolitan culture based on "common ideas and common values"- a culture that he compares to the morally and politically cohesive international societies of the past. This indicates his advocacy of an international society based on moral and ideological homogeneity which is common to all the people of the world, not just the educated elite. These values would be the result of compromise and mutual accommodation rather than the domination of one set of values over others. Given these points, how plausible is the creation of this "universal international society" envisioned by Bull?

Before addressing this larger question, however, what could

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[32] Bull, The Anarchical Society, p.317.

be asked is why is the kind of moral consensus that Bull is prescribing for the international system necessary? The five demands of the developing world on which Bull focuses - the demands for sovereignty, self-determination, racial justice, economic justice, and cultural liberation - are all rooted in Western values. Building on this common foundation, it could be argued, it should certainly be possible to come up with a viable conception of international justice which does not require the level of moral homogeneity that Bull prescribes. In other words, an international justice which is able to draw on a relatively small amount of international commonality, yet still be effective.

It is not clear that all of these five demands could, in fact, be accommodated within such a conception of "justice". The demands for economic change would require a fundamental realignment of moral and economic priorities and international conduct, as well as the acceptance of arguments currently rejected by the West. More important, the five demands must be understood as demands made in the past that do not necessarily reflect the needs of the present. In the modern world, the Third World is more powerful, indigenous forces are developing their own philosophies of international relations, and the need to accept these new values is much greater than in the past. Thus, the homogeneous cosmopolitan society that Bull supports is a necessity for the modern world.

It should be emphasized again that the homogeneous

cosmopolitan society that Bull advocates is, paradoxically, founded on the premise that diversity must be preserved. Bull wants to build a society that protects and supports the cultures, traditions, and uniqueness of the world's peoples. At the same time, he wishes the different cultures to be morally similar, at least to the extent that they can agree on fundamental values and come to adopt a common conception of justice. It is certainly apparent that large numbers of states and nations share fundamentally similar values in the modern world, but there are also areas of the world wherein fundamentally different values are culturally determined. Whether these diverse areas can ever be morally reconciled, to the degree that they can reach a moral consensus on justice, is highly debatable.

R.J. Vincent discusses the dimensions of the problem of the cultural relativism of morality using the example of human rights. "Human rights" are regarded in the West to refer mainly to the rights of the individual. Other cultures have very different ideas as to the value and place of the individual in society. In Africa, to be a person is to be part of a group. Social harmony is understood in terms of preserving the collectivity and, to this end, individuals are understood to have duties more than rights. In Vincent's estimation, African culture is inclined to turn the Western list of rights upside down: "(c)ollective rights are first in importance, second come economic and social rights, and third civil and political

rights."[33]

In China, the community and obligations have traditionally come before the individual and rights. Traditional China was based on a hierarchical structure that promoted unequal duties rather than equal rights. Such rights were a concept imported from the West. In modern China, these same influences can be seen to be at work, but within a Communist framework. Vincent notes that Communist China believes that debates about human rights should be fit into the larger struggle between the rich and poor of the world, the oppressors and the oppressed. "Individuals come last, by a distance longer than in African doctrine. Indeed, there is some doubt about whether they come anywhere at all."[34]

In Islamic countries, the community, once again, comes before individuals and duties before rights. Human rights are linked to duties to God, and freedom is found within the community of God. Distinctions are made between the status accorded non-Muslims and Muslims. There is no theological room for the separation of Church and State, a condition that prevents the emergence of the individual as being valuable in himself.

Given this kind of diversity, must the world always be divided into distinct social and political blocs? A larger question is whether or not a single unified world is possible.

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[33] R.J. Vincent, Human Rights and International Relations, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986), p.40.

[34] Ibid., p.42.

Clearly, globalists believe in a unified world system. Fred Halliday presents three versions of internationalism, any one of which, or all in combination, can plausibly describe the evolving modern international system.[35] All lead down the path to a world of relatively strong moral cohesiveness. The price to be paid for this cohesiveness, of course, is diversity. By contrast, Adda Bozeman presents an interpretation of the world system which is highly ethnocentric and open to dispute, but which, nonetheless, implies that moral division is inherent in the international system. In keeping with the discussion above, Bozeman asserts that Western values are simply incompatible with the values of the rest of the world, which are rooted in different historical conditions, social realities, and philosophical traditions. She is suggesting that nothing short of a complete cultural domination by the West of the rest of the world can successfully promulgate Western political and moral values.[36] If this is truly the case, then Bull's vision of international justice as the product of a diverse yet morally cohesive cosmopolitan society is an impossible dream.

As with so many other questions to be addressed during the course of this project, the question of the moral cohesiveness of humankind presents no clear answer. An argument such as Bozeman's

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[35] Fred Halliday, "Three Concepts of Internationalism", International Affairs,(v.64, #2, Spring 1988), 187-198.

[36] Adda Bozeman, "The International Order in a Multicultural World", The Expansion of International Society, ed. Hedley Bull and Adam Watson,(New York: Oxford University Press, 1984) pp. 387-406.

indicates that social/cultural differences create an insurmountable barrier between peoples. Vincent believes that such obstacles can and should be overcome. Bull agrees with Vincent. His prescription for international justice implies unavoidable cultural differences, but also basic moral and ideological commonalities. But Bull does not deal with the difficult question of finding similarity amid this diversity. Bull does not explain what the basis of international commonality should be. He simply suggests that it exists and that it can and must be found. Given the kind of international justice that he is pursuing, this question should have been addressed more clearly. As it is, I believe that Bull's own analysis of the international system lends little credence to his concept of international justice.

Returning to the first concern of this chapter, it appears to be that Bull's proposals for a "universal international society" are not very plausible. As Bull himself points out, there are considerable obstacles that stand in the way of building a common international morality. Most proposals for common international values or alternative world orders reflect the values and intellectual predispositions of the political scientists and idealists who are making the proposals. Western idealists postulate world orders based on their own ideals; Third World theorists often have a far different idea of what kind of world is either desirable or possible. The first major difficulty that the advocate of international morality must overcome is

proving that such competing visions can be reconciled. All of the other substantive obstacles to international justice arise from this first basic necessity. Foremost among these obstacles are the divisive forces expressed by the perpetuation of the state system.

Understanding the deficiencies in Bull's argument for justice in the international system is best achieved through an examination of his understanding of the state and the state system. Many idealists see states as being inherently incapable of cooperative behaviour. Many realists see states as the highest form of political expression and assign to them certain immutable characteristics. Bull sees the state system as being both very practical and very malleable. It is practical in the sense that it sustains international order, has done so for some time and shows little sign of becoming obsolete and replaced by some other form of political organization. It is malleable in that Bull does not attribute any particular philosophical characteristics to states. When Bull discusses the nature of the state, he describes a political entity that is defined solely by geographical area and the political sovereignty of a government over its people and territory. The state possesses no other inherent characteristics.

To Bull, the modern state may well serve the function of preserving different conceptions of morality and politics, but there is no reason to view this kind of function as a necessary characteristic of the institution. In his view, sweeping

generalizations about the "nature" of states and the state system cannot be shown to be valid because past practice is not an irrefutable guide to future behavior. States of various kinds may have been major sources of violence throughout human history, and Bull may acknowledge the statistical probability of war within a state system, but this does not mean that the conditions making for war cannot change under the influence of contemporary forces.

As a result, Bull sees almost unlimited potential in what the state system can achieve. Bull soundly rejects utopianism, but he makes the point that just as it is possible to visualize alternative world orders that eliminate the nation state, it is possible to visualize world orders that maintain the nation state and yet still fulfill utopian goals. Whereas idealists and realists would have to reject this interpretation of the state system by definition, Bull's understanding of the system readily allows for it. Nonetheless, having acknowledged the theoretical potential that Bull attributes to the state, it must be realized that the actual state system that he describes does not appear to possess the ability to attain the moral cohesiveness that Bull desires.

Bull's argument for the continuation of the state system is very convincing. He points out that, whatever the alleged inadequacies and inherent difficulties of the state system, the number of states in the contemporary world continues to grow. In addition, modern states are expected and required to shoulder far

greater responsibilities and functions than at any time in the past. Economic, political, and social interactions all occur, in some way, through the agency of the state.

The continuing popularity of the state remains an undeniable reality with which critics of the state system must contend. As Bull points out, nationalist movements, be they separatist tendencies within existing states (such as in Quebec) or groups struggling to establish a country (such as the PLO), are all concerned with creating new states. The fact that some of these extra-state groups have gained a measure of international legitimacy is not indicative of a rejection of the state system. Rather, the state-centric motivations of these organizations serves to strengthen the existing system. Even integrationist tendencies, as exemplified in the European Economic Community (EEC), are not so much a manifestation of a new form of international order as an example of the "nation-state writ large".[37] The considerations of economic and political power which are pushing the Europeans toward integration, Bull points out, are the same kind of forces that govern the behavior of states. The EEC may be creating a super-state, but it is still creating a state.

To those critics of the state system who argue that states are inherently incapable of dealing with the military, social, economic and environmental problems of the day, Bull replies that the causes of these problems are not to be found in the state

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[37] Bull, The Anarchical Society, p.266.

system; they are far deeper, and would have to be dealt with whether or not the world was organized into states. "Violence, economic injustice, and disharmony between man and nature have a longer history than the modern states-system" Bull writes.[38] He is correct, of course, but the obvious reply to this kind of assertion is to charge that the state system exacerbates these conditions of disharmony, or at least promotes a narrow conception of self-interest which impedes necessary cooperative behavior. But this response is based on an interpretation of the state system that Bull rejects. Even if it were possible to show that states do exacerbate uncooperative, destructive behavior, there is no necessary reason for them to do so and no reason that they could not be used to combat the same problems.

Bull recognizes that states play many positive and necessary roles in the modern international system. States maintain domestic order; internationally, cooperation between states in maintaining international society is the strongest and most necessary form of international solidarity that exists in the real world. Despite the anarchical nature of the international society, no international interactions could take place without this initial cooperation. The historical alternative to the state system has been "violence and disorder".[39] Even war, Bull argues, can be seen to have been mitigated by the state system, which has imposed norms and institutions on its conduct.

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[38] Bull, "The State's Positive Role...",114.

[39] Ibid., p.116.

What Bull has identified is the fact that the state system is expanding and, despite the desires and exhortations of the globalists who desire a unified world, shows little sign of declining. Recognizing these realities is one thing, however; explaining precisely why the state system continues is a different subject, but one which Bull addresses with considerable insight.

Bull rejects "the program of Western solidarists or global centralists", pointing out that there is no international consensus behind the kind of unified world that these thinkers favor.[40] The Socialist nations and the Third World, Bull asserts, view "the globalist doctrine (as) the ideology of the dominant Western powers".[41] Evidently, Bull agrees with this assessment.

> ... (T)he prescriptions (the globalists) put forward for restructuring the world, high-minded though they are, derive wholly from the liberal, social-democratic, and internationalist traditions of the West, and take no account of the values entertained in other parts of the world, with which compromises may have to be reached.[42]

The globalist failure to appreciate the influence of non-Western values leads them into the trap of evaluating the state along the very narrow lines of Western idealism. As Bull emphasises, this causes them to ignore the different perceptions of the state in most corners of the world. The globalist desire to eliminate the

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[40] Ibid., p.120.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., p. 120.

state, however, is not shared by a sizeable proportion of the world's peoples, who have excellent reasons for wanting the state system to survive and prosper.

Bull recognizes that, for much of the world, the state is a form of political organization that protects and defends the different, non-Western values which globalists overlook. For Socialist countries, the state is the source of security rather than war; it is the source of economic and social justice, not an obstacle to the attainment of these goals. Surrounded by powerful Western economic and social ideologies, Bull argues, Socialist states have a real need to avail themselves of the many institutions and principles associated with statehood in order to preserve themselves.[43] As recent events in Eastern Europe indicate, this does seem to be an accurate assessment.

The Third World historical experience with the Western world is, in Bull's view, the major factor underlining the Third World's desire to hold onto the state.

> Because they did not have states that were strong enough to withstand European or Western aggression, the African, Asian, and Oceanic peoples, as they see it, were subject to domination, exploration, and humiliation. It is by gaining control of states that they have been able to take charge of their own destiny.[44]

As with the Socialist countries, the state provides security to the people of the Third World. It provides the power for them to

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[43] Ibid. Recent events in the Socialist world date Bull's analysis, but also demonstrate that Western ideologies can be very destructive of alien systems, if given the chance.

[44] Ibid., p.121.

exercise certain amounts of economic and political autonomy; their defense of state sovereignty underlines their desire to protect their independence from unwanted foreign influences.

Bull notes some inconsistencies in the Socialist and Third World approaches to the question of state rights, but his basic assertion holds true: these world blocs have legitimate and very powerful reasons to desire and maintain the state system. Bull recognizes the political and moral divisions within the world system. He does not draw these observations to their logical conclusions, however, at least as they relate to his discussion of international justice. Given Bull's understanding of the international system, it appears to me that international justice based on a moral consensus is, logically, highly improbable. The cosmopolitan society calls for ideological and moral homogeneity. Yet, according to Bull, the Socialist world is seeking to protect its ideological uniqueness through the instrument of the state; Islamic states are resisting the moral influence of the West; and the rest of the developing world is pursuing different moral goals. Bull's international society and international justice, however, are predicated on the expansion of cosmopolitan society, on the adoption of common values on a very basic level. What Bull is talking about is a world dissimilar in certain aspects of culture and tradition, but which is sufficiently similar at a moral level to adhere to a common conception of justice. How is the reality of the state system, as described by Bull, to be reconciled with the ideal to which he aspires?

There is no obvious way out of this impasse. All of the possible solutions are limited by Bull's interpretation of the constraints of the international system. For example, there are many forces which are acting, with varying degrees of success, to bring the world closer together and spread common values. The actual effect of these forces is open to debate, but it cannot be denied that there are many states in the world that share a common morality and values and live together peacefully and cooperatively. Why should it be inconceiveable that this kind of system not gradually develop within the confines of the state system as a whole? There are a number of responses to this kind of assertion, but the most basic, for the purposes of this argument, is to point out that the kind of unifying effect that the proponents of this view support is very different from the kind of international system that Bull believes to be necessary for justice. This is because the argument is most often a globalist position, and is expressed as a form of internationalism described by Halliday as cultural internationalism.[45] This is the belief, condemned by Bull, that Western culture and values will come to dominate all others. Bull and the globalists have a much different idea of what moral homogeneity looks like. Bull's idea of international justice is based on the identification of common interests and the inculcation of common values, but these common interests and

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[45] Fred Halliday, "Three Concepts of Internationalism", International Affairs, (v. 64, Spring 1988), 194.

values reflect the existence of diversity and the need for compromise.

Bull may believe that international diversity is desirable and should be preserved, but his basic reason for prescribing moral compromise in the hope of creating a greater consensus in international society is based on the belief that such an approach is the only one with any chance of being successful. The difficulty is that the chances of international society being built and strengthened on the basis of moral compromise may be far less plausible than the notion of such a society built on the foundation of narrow moral and political homogeneity. Bull so effectively undermines this latter notion with his description of the modern international system, however, that the practical effect is to create a situation wherein a moral concept of international justice may be possible but is so improbable as to be virtually impossible.

Bull asserts that the survival of international society depends on a strengthening and expanding of international culture. In making this assertion, however, he provides little guidance as to how this goal can be attained. He can draw on no precedents to support his position; in the past, all existing international societies, as he recognizes, were based on a foundation of common practice, morality, and tradition. Even if the international societies of the past did not always start from a position of commonality, interaction between states and cultures and the domination of certain groups over others all had

a homogenizing and unifying effect. Bull does not see this happening in the modern international society, however, which is much different from any others that have come before in the kind of diversity that it is forced to accommodate. Bull plausibly argues that states within the system can recognize common interests and practices and be unified on that basis. Recognizing a common interest in survival, however, is quite different from recognizing or adopting shared views on something as fundamental and complex as morality - and, as was discussed in chapter three, Bull's concept of justice is decidedly moral. As Bull himself asserts, the existing international society is sufficiently flexible to include a wide variety of ideologies and moral outlooks. States already recognize common interests and practices to a sufficient degree to allow the society to function. But to require states to accept and be bound by common moral principles is to embark on an exercise in international society-building of a wholly different magnitude.

To understand the difficulty of this position it is necessary to understand the nature of consensus. Consensus is built on common perceptions and values. That is, it is possible for states to arrive at some understanding of what should constitute international morality and justice only if they start from similar moral positions. Thus, at a fundamental level, states must first share common values and practices before there can be any hope of consensus. The only other alternative is to require that states sacrifice some of their fundamental values in

order to preserve others. Bull's perception of the international system combines both of these perspectives. He sees a system of states sharing many values and institutions; how strong are the bonds created by this interaction is unknown. From this starting point, Bull develops a concept of moral international justice based on what amounts to a negotiated morality. International morality and justice would be the product of a rational process whereby the nations and different ideological/moral/economic blocs of the world would sit down and hammer out some compromise morality that could accommodate the most basic aspirations and fundamental interests of the world's peoples. There are at least two obvious problems with this argument.

First, even if a recognition of common interests was sufficient to get most states to the bargaining table to negotiate international morality, it is highly improbable that any would be willing to give up some cherished belief. Fundamental values are exactly that - fundamental. They cannot be discarded through some kind of coldy rational process. They may change through the influence of social and political forces, but not without considerable conflict and the benefit of time. They cannot be imposed from outside. In this case, Bull is putting the cart before the horse. Fundamental common values must emerge by themselves, through processes of international assimilation, interaction, and cultural conflict and domination. Only then can they serve as the basis for international justice. If these processes are incapable of creating this larger

morality, then the prospects for international justice dim considerably.

Second, it has been argued that the survival of the system is at stake and, therefore, states would have little choice but to reach some kind of moral compromise. This might be true, even if highly debatable, but accurately assessing the interests of states and then getting those states to act in accordance with those interests are two entirely separate projects. As Morgenthau and the realists discovered, states do not always behave as a preferred model says they should. Bull's argument depends on states assessing the international situation in the way that he sees it and then be willing to act in a completely rational manner to achieve the necessary goal. Simply because a particular objective is necessary, however, is no reason to assume that it is somehow obtainable within the confines of the system. The objective might be unobtainable, perhaps because of disagreements over perceptions and values which impose limitations on what the system is capable of doing.

It is certainly true that, at this point in time, it appears that the ideological divisions separating states are lessening. At the most, the world might be moving toward a condition of greater ideological compatibility; at the least, some of the major divisive forces cited by Bull may be much less divisive. Globalists can use the recent developments in the Socialist world as evidence that a more cohesive world order is not only theoretically possible, but is attainable despite the influence

of the other forces locked into the state system. This may be true, but I believe that it would be premature to place this kind of interpretation on the evidence. The forces that Bull has described are still present in the international system, to varying degrees. A more accurate interpretation of the modern international system, one which balances the unifying tendencies at work with the more divisive factors, is that the world is developing into ideological and moral blocs of nations. This interpretation is in keeping with Bull's overall analysis. His division of the world into Western, Socialist, and Third World blocs reflects the ideological and moral tendencies that he sees in each. The difference in the modern world is that the Soviet Socialist bloc may be crumbling and integrating into the Western bloc to form something new. Even this reading of events, however, is very premature. Nonetheless, the bottom line is that world blocs, distinguished by ideological, moral, cultural and historical factors still persist and still maintain international diversity. As long as they do, Bull's analysis of the international system remains intact, but his prescriptions for an overarching international justice remain unattainable.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, the international society described by Bull is too diverse and encompasses too many competing moral and political aspirations to be unified around the concept of international justice. It is largely Bull's own examination of the existing international system that provides the case against

international justice. This does not mean that international justice as envisioned by Bull is unattainable, but it does mean that Bull's evaluation of the international system would have to be deficient in order to allow for justice. This is, of course, a distinct possibility. Bull may have underestimated the efficacy of internationalist forces within the system or overestimated the pull of international divisions. Taken on its own terms, however, the international society does not easily allow for international justice.

Bull sees international society surviving only if it can become a cosmopolitan society of common values and institutions. Bull's own analysis of the state system, however, portrays it as an extremely heterogeneous entity. As a result, common values are not easily inculcated, and the kind of common values that do exist are very basic - hardly the kind of structure on which to build a complex moral system of international justice.

Ultimately, the greatest value of Bull's analysis of international justice is to be found in the direction in which he has pointed the study of international relations. If the concept of international justice is to be credibly addressed, greater emphasis must be placed on determining if significant commonalities exist between the different moral and ideological blocs of the world and, if not, if they can be made to exist. At the least, this kind of study will lead to a more complete understanding of what is possible within the international system and give the political scientist a better idea of what

forces must be considered when assessing the system's development. Bull has presented an analysis of the international system which demands that these considerations be taken into account.

In the end, the value of Bull's discussion of international justice lies more in the questions he causes to be asked than the answers he has provided.

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